CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

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A POEM,

IN EIGHT BOOKS.

BY

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

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BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST BOOK.

After a short introduction, which states the miraculous acts of Christ, and serves to mark the period at which the Poem commences, Satan goes forth by night into the wilderness, and finds himself in the very spot, where he had in vain practised his temptations upon Christ: Here he falls into meditation upon that unsuccessful interview, and vents himself in soliloquy: Indignant under disappointment and impatient to repair his defeat, he ascends to the summit of the mountain, from whence he had exhibited the kingdoms of the earth, and calls the Devils from all parts of the Heathen world: The whole host of Infernals assemble at his summons: The chief leaders are enumerated, their persons and attributes described: Satan addresses them, and proposes the subject matter for their consultation, namely, By what means to counteract the power of Christ upon earth: Baal delivers his sentiments by stating difficulties and objections without any decided opinion unless for seduction in the general: Moloch angrily resents what he considers as pointed at himself, and speaks disdainfully against the proposal of seduction, as not only desperate but disgraceful: Belial replies, and after much circumlocution suggests a temptation to be set on foot by Mammon: He is interrupted by Satan, who reproves him for certain digressions in his speech, but adopts his hint of employing Mammon, and calls upon that evil Spirit to attempt the fidelity of Judas Iscariot, whom he points out to him as the only one of the Disciples open to seduction: Mammon at first affects to excuse himself from the undertaking, but in conclusion accepts it, and taking wing in presence of the whole applauding host sets out upon his embassy, directing his course to the city of Jerusalem.

CALVARY.

BOOK I.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE DEVILS.

HAIL, awful CALVARY! forſaking now
Aonian haunts and the unhallow'd Nine,
I viſit thy ſad mount, and thence invite
The mournful echoes to my deep-ton'd harp,
Hymning the whilſt in ſolemn numbers praiſe
To God for mercies purchas'd by the death
Of that myſterious Being, virgin-born,
Savior of loſt mankind, who on the croſs,
Lord though he be of life and one with God,
In mortal pangs expir'd; there to atone
For a degenerate world, by his pure blood
To waſh original corruption out,
And riſing victor from the grave diſpel
Sin and it's offspring Death, with all the train
Of idol gods, uſurping earth and heav'n.

Now had the wond'rous acts by JESUS wrought
Spread wide his fame thro' all Judæa's realm;
The leper cleans'd, the blind to ſight reſtor'd,
The ſick to health and ev'n the dead to life,
Tho' warn'd to ſilence, for his modeſt ear
Sought not the praiſe of men, ſo much the more
Publiſh'd his mercies; Dæmons at his call
With horrid ſhrieks, that teſtified his power,
Came forth from men poſſeſt and fled; his voice
Rebuk'd the ſeas and winds; vaſt was the throng
That follow'd where he led, and thouſands found
In the waſte wilderneſs mirac'lous food:
They ſaw, they marvel'd, and of force confeſt
Meſſias in his power, not ſo in form;
For there no comelineſs, no outward grace,
No princely ſtate appear'd: Slow to renounce
Illuſions long indulg'd, their wavering minds
'Twixt two opinions halted, while in place
Of theſe bright viſions they beheld a man
Lowly and meek, a houſeleſs wanderer,
That had not where on earth to lay his head:—
Such can our Iſrael's great Reſtorer be,
Such our Meſſias?—Thus their troubled thoughts
Like meeting currents claſh'd; when as he ſpake
Truth flow'd reſiſtleſs from his lips, his eyes

Beam'd

Beam'd mercy, and his Father's glory ſhone
Effulgent in his face; then every tongue
Was huſh'd to ſilence, every doubt diſpell'd,
And every heart confeſs'd him Lord and Chriſt.
'Twas night, when SATAN, prince of darkneſs call'd,
And fitly call'd, for evil hates the day,
Walk'd forth on helliſh meditation bent,
Prowling the wilderneſs: Where'er he trode,
Earth quak'd beneath his foot; before him roll'd
Thick cloud and vapour, making night's dark ſhade
More black and terrible; the beaſts of prey,
Every wild thing that roams the ſavage waſte
And howling to the moon demands it's food,
Fled his approach; the lion and the pard
Scented the blaſt and ſlunk into their dens;
For whilſt his breaſt with raging paſſions boil'd,
Hatred, revenge and blaſphemous deſpight,
The ſighs he vented from the hell within
Breath'd death into the air; his haggard eyes,
Which ſtill in ſpeechleſs agonies he roll'd,
Out-glar'd the hyæna's; other fires than their's
To light his diſmal path he needed none.
Now, having ſtretch'd athwart the ſandy wild
Clear to its rocky verge, the Arch-fiend paus'd
And upward caſt his eye, if haply there

Darkling

Darkling he might diſcern what ſaucy mound
Dar'd to arreſt his courſe; for yet there dwelt
Such vigor in his wing, nor depth, nor heighth,
Mountains nor ſeas might check his bold career,
Were he ſo purpos'd; neither would he deign
To aſk one charitable ſtar for light,
Thoughtful of former glory, when he ſoar'd
Son of the morning far above their ſpheres.
Whereat he 'gan put forth his plumed vans
From either ſhoulder ſtretcht for flight, when ſoon
The fuel'd clouds to fierce encounter ruſh'd,
Loud thunders bellow'd, and the lightning's flaſh
Smote on the craggy cliff; at ſight whereof
Conſcious that now he preſs'd the fatal ſpot,
Where late he commun'd with the Son of God,
Who for the ſpace of forty days and nights
Foil'd ev'ry vain device, with ſhame abaſh'd
And pondering in his mind his foul defeat,
Down, down at once his flagging pinions fell
Cloſe cow'ring to his ribs: As ſome proud ſhip
Between the tropics o'er th' Atlantic wave
Speeding amain to reach her deſtin'd port,
If chance th' experienc'd mariner eſpies
The gathering hurricane, no ſtay, no ſtop,
Quick to the yard each ſwelling ſail is furl'd,

The curl'd waves whitening as the torrent drives,
And ſoon her taunt and lofty topmaſt lower'd
Strikes to the gale; ſo he his towering heighth,
That to angelic ſtature now had ſwell'd,
Shrunk into human ſize, nor other ſeem'd
Than pilgrim ſqualid and with years and toil
Bending decrepit, when from his full heart
Words intermixt with groans thus forc'd their way.
Yes, hateful wilderneſs, deteſted rocks,
Whom I would curſe, had Nature left one blade
On your bare ribs, which curſing I might blaſt,
Full well I know you; deep, too deep engrav'd
On memory's tablet your rude horrors live.
And you, officious lightnings, hide your fires!
Come, Night, again; let central darkneſs ſhrowd
Scenes, whoſe tormenting recollection ſtabs
My unavenged ſoul. Can I forget
This Son of Joſeph? Son of God henceforth
Of force I muſt confeſs him, for what leſs
Than god-like conſtancy could have withſtood
Temptations great and terrible as mine?
Something which man is not he needs muſt be,
Virtue, that angels boaſt not, he muſt have,
Elſe had my ſnares enclos'd him, elſe the world,
Which then was mine to give, had been a bribe

Too glorious not to dazzle every eye
But his, who made thoſe glories what they are.
Still I muſt doubt the Father's love ſincere,
Tho' loudly vouch'd by his own voice from heav'n:
Is this a father's love, is this his care,
Here to expoſe him to this deſart wild
Forty long ſleepleſs nights and faſting days,
No Angel guard about him, loſt, forlorn,
Abandon'd to the elements, to beaſts
More fierce than this loud ſtorm; nay, fiercer ſtill,
To me than all more terrible, to me,
Foe of his life inveterate and avow'd?
Rare ſample of God's love! If here his CHRIST
Encounter'd aught of danger; and if none,
What elſe could prompt him to this vain diſplay
Of voluntary penance, but the love
Of flattery and a deſpicable wiſh
To hear himſelf applauded? In this ſpot,
Beneath the jutting roof of this rude cliff,
I firſt ſurpriz'd this wand'ring Son of God,
This Savior of the world: Fainting he ſeem'd
With thirſt and hunger, pale as death his cheek,
His hollow eyes deep ſunk, and from his brow
Big drops of ſweat diſtill'd, as one o'erſpent
And ſinking to the earth there to expire:

A ready

A ready tale he had for pity's ear,
A melancholy liſt of wants and woes;
He had not taſted food, and fairly own'd
That Nature's cravings were intenſe; when I,
Glad at the heart to find him thus beſieg'd
With appetite ſo eager, ſtooping down,
From the diſſever'd fragments, that here lie
About the baſe of this ſtorm-beaten rock,
Choſe out a few ſmooth ſtones, and tempting ſaid,
If thou art hungry, eat; convert theſe ſtones,
If thou art God's own Son, to bread, and eat!
But he not ſo beguil'd ſpurn'd them away,
And ſilenc'd me with text of holy writ:
A nobler appetite I next aſſail'd,
Ambition; to the mountain's top we ſoar'd;
I ſpread the kingdoms of the earth in ſight,
Fit ſight to whet the hunger of the mind;
But mind and body he alike would ſtarve,
Nor thank nor homage render back for food
Of my providing: One laſt hope remain'd;
Methought there was a godly pride about him,
Which with right holy flattery I might win:
Upon the temple's topmoſt pinnacle
I plac'd this ſcorner of an earthly crown,
And bade him be a God; Caſt thyſelf down;

Behold, quoth I, the Angels are on wing
To bear thee up unhurt: With ſtern rebuke,
Get thee behind me SATAN! he replied;
Some power unſeen control'd me, down I fell,
Down from the giddy eminence I plung'd,
And left him to his Angels, whilſt their hymns
And halelujahs echo'd through the air
His triumphs and my ſecond fall from heav'n.
And now if dark deſpair ſhall reach this heart,
Which of hell's tetrarchs can arraign their king,
Or fix on me his ſhare of public loſs
And overthrow ſuſtain'd in this attack?
None, for none dare. If I, till now ſupreme,
Great idol of the Gentile world, for whom
So many groves, ſo many altars blaze;
If I, to whom by various names ador'd
Thouſands of temples riſe, whilſt one alone,
One ſolitary pile on Sion's hill
Echoes the praiſe of God, neglected elſe
Of all; if I, if SATAN muſt ſubmit
To CHRIST, revenge to patience, war to peace,
And men muſt learn new maxims of forgiveneſs,
Maxims I neither practiſe nor inſtil,
Heroes and kings and conquerors, farewell!
Greater is he who ſerves than he who reigns:

To ſuffer, to ſubmit, to turn the cheek
To the proud ſmiter, theſe are virtues now;
Hence with ſuch virtues! If theſe rules obtain,
If this tame doctrine ſhall unman the world,
Altars and groves and temples all muſt ſink;
Olympus and its ſynod, every Grace
And every Muſe, all that the chiſſel wrought
In Greece or Rome, ſhall moulder into duſt,
And CHRIST and Reaſon ſhall uſurp the world.
He ceas'd, and now his ſwelling boſom heav'd
With indignation like the labouring earth,
Which ſubterranean vapors undermine,
Pent in it's ſulph'rous entrails: Up he ſprung
To that high mountain top whence he review'd
The kingdoms of the earth, whilſt at his ſide
CHRIST's humble virtue ſtood, on other realms,
Realms of immortal happineſs, intent:
Here, as a vulture, on the craggy peak
Of Caucaſus or Hæmus left to watch,
Screams out his ſhrill alarm, at ſound whereof
The carrion troop, upon the wing for prey,
Come flocking to the ſignal, SATAN thus
Stood eminent, and call'd his dark compeers;
So loud he call'd, that to the fartheſt bounds

Of Pagan iſle or continent was heard
His voice re-echoing thro' the vault of heav'n.
Heroes and demi-gods, Olympian powers,
Infernal princes of hell's dark abyſs,
Heav'n's exiles, ſpirits of air, water, fire,
Or whatſoever element confines
Your incorporeal eſſences, Oh hear!
Hear and aſſemble! 'tis your leader calls;
It is your champion's voice, in happier hours
Heard and obey'd, now in extremeſt need
Be preſent and aſſiſt our great divan.
No more, for ſoon was heard the diſtant ſound
Of wings that beat the air; from every point
Of the four winds the gathering ſwarm came on;
From Grete, from Cyprus and the Ionian coaſt,
From Egypt, Afric and the Auſonian ſhores,
Gods of all names, dimenſions and degrees.
Great was their ſovereign's triumph to behold
This prompt obedience to his high command;
For now deſcending on the deſart heath
To martial muſic, the infernal hoſt
In bands and columns, by their chiefs arrang'd,
Stood firm; if ever gleam of joy might reach
Heart ſo accurs'd, the Arch-fiend had felt it here,

As

As with a monarch's eye he now review'd
His armies, covering all the ſwarthy plain.
  Come, Muſe, and to your ſuppliant's eyes impart
One ray of that pure light, which late you pour'd
On the dark orbs of your immortal Bard
Eclips'd by drop ſerene: Conduct me now,
Me from my better days of bold emprize
Far in decline, and with the hoary hand
Of Time hard ſtricken, yet adventuring forth
O'er Nature's limits into worlds unſeen,
Peopled with ſhadowy forms and phantoms dire:
Oh! bear me on your pinions in this void,
Where weary foot ne'er reſted; and behold!
All hell burſts forth: Support me, or I ſink.
  Now glimm'ring twilight ſtreak'd the Eaſtern ſky,
For he, that on his forehead brings the morn,
Star-crowned PHOSPHORUS had heard the call,
And with the foremoſt ſtood. Beſide him one
Of towering ſtature and majeſtic port,
Himſelf a hoſt; his black and curling locks
Down his herculean ſhoulders copious flow'd;
In glittering braſs upon his ſhield he bore
A kingly eagle, enſign of command,
BAAL his name, ſecond to none in ſtate
Save only his great chieftain; worſhipp'd long

In Babylon, till Daniel drove him thence
With all his gluttonous prieſts; exalted ſince
High above all the idol gods of Greece,
Thron'd on Olympus, and his impious hand
Arm'd with the thunder; yet he ru'd the zeal
Of furious Jehu, and that mournful day,
When he beheld his altars ſtream with blood,
His prophets and his prieſts by hundreds ſlain
Upon Mount Carmel. MOLOCH in the van,
Mail'd at all points for war, with ſpear and helm
And plumed creſt and garments roll'd in blood,
Flam'd like a meteor: Him with horrid joy
SATAN awhile ſurvey'd, then ſighing cried,
Oh! worthy of command, had all like thee
So bravely fought, heav'n never had been loſt.
Thence as he glanc'd his eye, far other form
And much unfit for war he next eſpied,
CHEMOS, the ſin of Moab; power obſcene,
Emaſculate and ſoft, in looſe attire
A ſenſual deity; his glory 'twas
In arts of baſe ſeduction to excel,
And leagu'd with harlots to have turn'd the heart
Of that wiſe king, and drawn him from his God
To bend his aged knees at idol ſhrines.
Cloſe at his ſide ſtood one, in whoſe ſoft eyes

Enſnaring ſmiles and beauteous ruin lurk'd;
Oh! that ſuch grace ſhould be allied to ſin;
Zidonian goddeſs, ASHTORETH her name;
Heav'n would not quite deſtroy ſo fair a work,
But wantonneſs uſurp'd an angel face,
And with her innocence had chang'd her ſex:
Yet let that ſex beware, for in their ſouls,
When once ſhe enters, peace no longer dwells;
Witneſs that Magdalen, whoſe frantic breaſt,
Till by CHRIST's mercy heal'd, ſev'n dæmons rent,
All ſin-begotten, all her brood accurſt.
But SATAN, whoſe ſtern heart, ſtranger to love,
All weakneſs tho' in ſhape of ſin diſdain'd,
And only priz'd ſpirits more like himſelf,
Indignant turn'd aſide, and bent his eye
Where DAGON, giant god, amidſt the ranks,
Like Teneriff or Ætna, proudly tower'd:
DAGON of Gath and Aſkalon the boaſt
In that ſad flight, when on Gilboa's mount
The ſhield of Saul was vilely thrown away,
And Iſrael's beauty periſh'd: Him awhile
With ſcowling eye the infernal king ſurvey'd,
Then taunting cried, O DAGON, vaſt in ſize,
In ſoul diminutive, had that huge maſs
Valour proportionate, heav'n had been our's;

But

But fitter thou, dull ſpirit, to people hell
Than re-aſſault God's throne: Where was thy pride,
When overthrown in Gaza by the ſtrength
Of that uxorious Danite? Humbled now
I know thy nightly haunts, and how thou driv'ſt
Wretches poſſeſt to hide themſelves in tombs,
Whence I beheld thee 'midſt the herd unclean
Scour down the ſteep and plunge into the ſea.
But now a fairer form arreſts the eye
Of hell's deſpotic lord; his radiant veſt
Of Tyrian purple, ſtudded thick with gems,
Flow'd graceful: He for courts was form'd, for feaſts,
For ladies chambers and for amorous ſports;
He lov'd not camps nor the rude toils of war;
BELIAL his name; around his temples twin'd
A wreath of roſes, and, where'er he paſs'd,
His garments fann'd a breeze of rich perfume:
No ear had he for the ſhrill-toned trump,
Him the ſoft warble of the Lydian flute
Delighted rather, the love-ſoothing harp,
Sappho's looſe ſong and the Aonian Maids
And zoneleſs Graces floating in the dance;
Yet from his lips ſweet eloquence diſtill'd,
As honey from the bee, but ſtill his voice
Ne'er counſell'd aught but cunning and deceit,

Mean

Mean truce and baſe capitulating terms;
Therefore by SATAN held in ſlight account,
For devils affect a dignity in ſin.
Laſt in the field, and from the reſt apart,
Was MAMMON; cautious was his ſtep and ſlow,
His eye ſtill watchful to prevent ſurprize,
Squalid his veſture and his locks uncomb'd;
For gain and uſury engroſs'd his ſoul,
Nor other care had he but to amaſs
Wealth unenjoy'd, and gloat upon his hoard:
Had there been only happineſs in heav'n
And gold in hell, MAMMON had ſpurn'd the bliſs,
And hugg'd the treaſure cheaply earn'd with pain.
His princes thus review'd, from the hill top
SATAN ſwift-glancing flew, and in the midſt
Roſe like a meteor; whereat all the hoſt
Sent up a general ſhout: he with his hand
Gave ſign, and wheel'd the Stygian phalanx round,
Horrible ſight! A theatre of fiends,
And each the foe of man; idols and imps,
Wizzards, familiars, ſprites, phantaſmas, dreams,
Sorrows and pains and deaths in every ſhape
Cover'd the blaſted heath: Th' infernal king,
Tho' in his heart, by mutinous paſſions torn,
Thought claſh'd with thought, and all was anarchy,

Yet with aſſum'd compoſure beck'ning forth
His princes, whilſt th' inferior throng ſtood off,
And mute attention reign'd, in few thus ſpake:
  Friends and confederates, welcome! for this proof
Of your affiance, thanks! On every call,
Whether we need your counſel or your arms,
Joyful I ſee your ready zeal diſplays
Virtues, which hell itſelf cannot corrupt.
I mean not to declame: The occaſion told
Speaks its own import, and the time's diſpatch
All waſte of words forbids. God's Son on earth,
CHRIST, the reveal'd Meſſias, how to oppoſe
Is now the queſtion; by what force, or power—
Temptations have been tried, I name not them—
Or dark conſpiracy, we may pull down
This ſun of righteouſneſs from his bright ſphere
Declare, who can: I pauſe for a reply.
  Silence enſu'd, whilſt every eye was turn'd
Inſtinctively on BAAL; he of all
Hell's magi fill'd the ſeat of wiſdom chief:
Experienc'd long in craft, and nothing apt
To give ſtrait counſel, flow of ſpeech he was;
To hint, propound, dilate, and ſo entice
Other opinions forth, them to refute,

And

And thereon build his own, was all his art.
After long pauſe and heſitation feign'd,
Stale trick of orators, he thus began:
  Why thus on me, as I were worthy, me,
Loſt being like yourſelves, as I alone
Cou'd compaſs this high argument, on me,
Leaſt in your ſapient conclave, why you point
Theſe ſcrutinizing looks, I muſe; and aw'd
By this your expectation fain wou'd ſhrink
From the great taſk to ſilence, had you not
O'er theſe poor faculties ſuch full controul,
As to put by all pleas, and call them forth
In heav'n or earth, or hell's profound abyſs,
Your's in all uſes, preſent at all hours.
Our kingly chief hath told us we are met
To combat CHRIST on earth: Be't ſo! We yet
May try our fortune in another field;
Worſe fortune than in heav'n befell our arms,
Worſe downfall than to hell, we cannot prove.
But with the ſcene our action too muſt change:
How? to what warfare? Circumvention, fraud,
Seduction; theſe are earthly weapons, theſe
As man to man oppoſes, ſo muſt we
To CHRIST incarnate. There be ſome, who cry,
Hence with ſuch daſtard arts! War, open war!

I honor ſuch bold counſellors, and yield
All that I can, my praiſe; till one be found,
One that may rival God's own Son in power,
And miracle to miracle oppoſe,
More than my praiſe I cannot, my aſſent
I will not give; 'twere madneſs: And how war
With God? what arms may we employ 'gainſt him,
Whoſe very prophets can call down heaven's fires
Upon our prieſts and altars? For myſelf,
What powers I had I ſhall not ſoon forget;
What I have left I know, and for your uſe
Shall huſband as I may, not vainly riſque
Where they muſt ſurely fail. The Jews pretend
That CHRIST colludes with Belzebub; the Jews
As far miſtake my nature as my name:
The fallacy, O peers, confutes itſelf,
Forg'd to diſparage CHRIST, not honor me:
Oh! that I had his wonder-working powers;
I'm not that fool to turn them on myſelf:
No, my brave friends, I've yet too much to loſe;
Though Babylon's proud ſhrines are laid in duſt,
Rome's capitol ſurvives, and thro' the world
Where'er her eagles fly, upon their wings
They bear my thunder and they ſpread my fame:
Therefore no more of Belzebub and CHRIST;

No

No league, no compact can we hold together.
What then enſues? Deſpair? Periſh the thought!
The brave renounce it, and the wiſe prevent;
You are both wiſe and brave. Our leader ſays
Temptations have been tried, and tried in vain,
Himſelf the tempter. Who will tread that ground,
Where he was foil'd? For Adam a mere toy,
An apple ſerv'd; CHRIST is not brib'd by worlds:
So much the ſecond Man exceeds the firſt
In ſtrength and glory. But tho' CHRIST himſelf
Will not be tempted, thoſe who hear him may:
Jews may be urg'd to envy, to revenge,
To murder; a rebellious race of old,
To kill a prophet or betray his God
What Jew was ever found to need the ſpur?
Wiſt ye not what a train this preacher hath,
What followers, what diſciples? Theſe are men,
Mere men, frail ſons of Adam, born in ſin.
Here is our hope. I leave it to your thoughts.
He ceas'd, but neither murmur nor applauſe
Follow'd his ſpeech, for MOLOCH, whoſe fell heart
Ill ſtomach'd this tame counſel, leaſt of all
Taunts thinly cover'd under maſk of praiſe,
Sprung forth impetuous, and with ſcowling brow
And accent acrimonious thus replied:

My

My thoughts it ſeems are known before I ſpeak;
War, open war is all my note: I riſe
To thank the prophet, who thus reads my heart,
Where honeſty ſhou'd wear it, in my face;
That face from danger I did never hide,
How then from him? Nor am I by his praiſe
More honor'd than by his diſſenting voice:
For whilſt he counſels circumvention, fraud,
Seduction,—if my memory wrongs his words
I yield it to correction,—we ſtand off
Wide as the poles apart. Much I had hop'd
When the great Tempter fail'd and in your ears
Sung his own honor's dirge, we had heard the laſt
Of plots and mean temptations; mean I call them,
For great names cannot ſanctify mean deeds:
SATAN himſelf knows I oppos'd the attempt,
Appeal'd, proteſted; my thrice-honor'd chief
Knows it full well and bluſhes for th' event.
And are we now caballing how to outwit
A few poor harmleſs fiſhermen, for ſuch
Are CHRIST's diſciples; how to gull and cheat
Their ſimple hearts of honeſty? Oh peers,
For ſhame, if not for pity, leave them that,
That beggar's virtue: And is this the theme,
The mighty theme, which now employs the thoughts

Of your immortal ſynod? Shame, Oh ſhame!
Princes, Dominions, Arch-angelic Thrones,
Imperial Lords! theſe were your titles once,
By theſe names ye were known above the ſtars,
Shame not your antient dignities, nor ſink
Beneath the vileſt of the ſons of men,
Whiſperers, informers, ſpies. If CHRIST be God,
Fight, as becometh you to fight, with God:
If man, and ſure his birth beſpeaks no more,
Why all this preparation, this conſult,
Theſe mighty machinations and cabals?
Off with your foe at once, diſmiſs him hence
Where all his brother prophets have been ſent;
Where his precurſor John is gone before,
Whoſe voice ſtill echoes thro' this wilderneſs:—
"Repent ye, for God's kingdom is at hand!
"Prepare ye the Lord's way!"—It is prepar'd;
It leads to death, it marſhals him the road
To that oblivious bourne, whence none return:
Herod yet lives; another royal feaſt,
Another wanton dance, and he, for whom
So many innocents were ſlain, ſhall fall.
Once vanquiſh'd, are we therefore to deſpair?
In heav'n unequal battle we provok'd;
Tho' vaſt our hoſt, the million was with God:

On

On earth enquire of all the nations round
Whom they will ſerve, with one voice they reply,
We are their gods; they feed us with their blood,
Their ſons and daughters they make paſs through fire
To do us grace; if their own fleſh they give,
Shall they with-hold to ſacrifice a foe?
Twelve tribes were all Jehovah had on earth,
And ten are loſt; of this ſmall remnant few
And wretched are the friends that league with Heav'n.
And where is now CHRIST's promis'd reign on earth?
When God's own ſervants riſe againſt his Son,
And thoſe, to whom the promiſes were giv'n,
Revolt from their Meſſias, can we wiſh
Greater revenge? What need have we to tempt
Them, who have hearts rebellious as our own,
As prompt to malice, no leſs prone to vex
God's righteous ſpirit? And let come what may,
It comes not to our loſs, rather our gain.
Let God ariſe to vengeance; let him pour
Deſtruction on his temple, whoſe proud heighth
Our chief can witneſs, meaſur'd by his fall:
Let him not leave one ſtone upon another,
As his raſh Son hath menac'd; let his wrath
Thro' all the inhoſpitable earth diſperſe
His ſcatter'd tribes; ſuch ever be the fate

Of all his worſhippers! May ſcorn, contempt,
Deriſion be their lot, and may their God
Never recall his curſe! Are we, O peers,
To mourn for his Jeruſalem? Our joy
Springs from confuſion; enmity 'twixt God
And man is our beſt triumph: For myſelf,
War is my harveſt, then my altars blaze
Brighteſt, when human victims feed the flame.
Breathleſs he paus'd, ſo rapid was the pulſe
Of his high-beating heart he ſtood as one
Choak'd and convuls'd with rage; when as he ceas'd,
He ſmote his mailed habergeon ſo loud,
Hell's armed legions heard, and ſhook their ſpears
Betok'ning war: Frowning he look'd around,
Whilſt from his fiery eyes ſuch terror glanc'd,
It ſeem'd as if his pride meant to abaſh
And ſilence all oppoſers: Yet not long
His triumph, for now BELIAL from the ranks
Graceful advanc'd, and as he put aſide
His purple robe in act to ſpeak, the throng,
Such was the dazzling beauty of his form,
Fell back a ſpace; then ſtood all eyes and ears
In expectation mute as death: Though hell
Own'd not a ſpirit more falſe, ſenſual and baſe,
Yet ever as he ſpake ſuch action grac'd

His words, ſo muſically ſoft they flow'd,
Who moſt deſpis'd the pleader prais'd the ſpeech:
When thus with mild inſinuating looks,
Maſking his rancorous heart, the Fiend began.
After ſo many peaceful ages paſt
Since firſt emerging from hell's dark abyſs,
Rous'd by our Arch-angelic Chief, we ſprung
Up to this middle region, and here ſeiz'd
On this terreſtrial globe, created firſt
For man, our vaſſal now, where at full eaſe,
Lords of the elements and gods ador'd,
We reign and revel undiſturb'd of Heav'n,
If God, whoſe jealouſy be ſure ill brooks
That this fair world ſhould be ſo long poſſeſs'd
Of us his exil'd angels, and his name
Pent up in Paleſtine, ſhould now arouſe
His ſlumb'ring wrath, and his beſt ſtrength put forth
To wreſtle for loſt empire, and our earth,
As we in evil hour his heav'n, aſſail,
Who of this mighty ſynod but muſt own
The provocation warrants the retort?
If then the Maker of mankind hath cauſe
To meditate their reſcue, we no leſs
Have cauſe to oppoſe th' attempt, and hold them faſt
To their allegiance in deſpite of Heav'n.

Much then we owe to our great Leader's care,
Which, ever watchful o'er the public weal,
Calls us to this full council, here to meet
In grave conſult how beſt we may repair
Paſt diſappointments, and repel the ſpite
Of this new Champion, levell'd at our ſhrines.
Great is the trouble of my thoughts, O peers,
And much perplex'd am I with doubts, what name,
Nature and office to aſcribe to CHRIST;
In form the lowlieſt of the ſons of men,
In miracles omnipotent as God;
Whoſe voice controuls the ſtouteſt of our hoſt,
Bids the graves open and their dead come forth;
Whoſe very touch is health; who with a glance
Pervades each heart, abſolves it or condemns;
Whoſe virgin birth credulity ſcarce owns,
And Nature diſavows. Prais'd to all time,
Immortal as himſelf be the renown
Of that wiſe ſpirit, who ſhall deviſe the means
By force or fraud to overthrow the power
Of this myſterious foe, what ſhall I ſay?—
Prieſt, Prophet, King, Meſſias, Son of God.
Yet how God's unity, which well we know
Endures no ſecond, ſhould adopt a Son
And eſſence indiviſible divide,

Baffles my weak conjecture: Let that paſs!
To ſuch hard doctrines I ſubſcribe no faith:
I'll call him man inſpir'd, and wait till death
Gives ſentence of mortality upon him.
Meanwhile let circumſpection on our part
Fill all the anxious interim; alarm
Rome's jealouſy, ſtir up the captious ſpleen
Of the proud Phariſee, beſet him round
With ſnares to catch him, urge the envious prieſts,
For envy ſtill beneath the altar lurks,
And note the man he truſts. MAMMON could tell,
Though MAMMON boaſts not of his own ſucceſs,
How few of human mould have yet withſtood
His glittering, golden lures. The ſword can kill
Man's body, gold deſtroys his very ſoul:
Yet mark me well, I counſel not to tempt
The Maſter; poverty can do no more
Than his own mortifying penance does,
Hunger and thirſt and obſtinately ſtarve,
When his mere wiſh could make the rock a ſpring
And its hard fragments bread: Yet ſure I am
All are not CHRIST's in heart, who with their lips
Confeſs him; theſe are men, and therefore frail,
Frail and corruptible: And let none ſay,
Fear prompts this counſel; I diſclaim all fear

But

But for the general cauſe: In every heart
Nature hath built my altar; every ſect,
Nation and language with one voice confeſs
Pleaſure the ſovereign good: The Stoic churl,
The dogged Cynic ſnarling in his tub,
And all the ragged moralizing crew
Are hypocrites; philoſophy itſelf
Is but my votary beneath a cloak:
It harms not me, though every idol God
Were tumbled from his baſe; alike I ſcorn
Sampſon's ſtrong nerve and Daniel's flaming zeal:
And let CHRIST preach his mortifying rules,
Let him go forth through all the Gentile world,
And on the ruin of our fanes erect
His church triumphant o'er the gates of hell,
Still, ſtill man's heart will draw the ſecret ſigh
For pleaſures unenjoy'd; the gloomy cell
And melancholy faſt, the midnight prayer
And pale contrition weeping o'er her lamp
Are penances, from which the ſenſe revolts,
Fines, that compounding ſuperſtition pays
For pleaſures paſt, or bribes for more to come.
Enough of this vain boaſt, here SATAN cried;
More than enough of theſe voluptuous ſtrains,
Which, tho' they lull the ear, diſarm the ſoul

Of its beſt attribute: Not gaudy flowers
Are cull'd for med'cine, but the humble weed;
True wiſdom, ever frugal of her ſpeech,
Gives ſage advice in plain and homely words.
The ſum of all our reaſoning ends in this,
That nothing but the death of CHRIST can ſolve
The myſtery of his nature; till he falls
Scarce can I ſay we ſtand: All voices then,
Though varying in the means, conſpire his death;
Some cautiouſly as BAAL; ſome with zeal
Precipitate as MOLOCH, whoſe ſwift thought
Vaults over all impediments to ſeize
The goal of his ambition. But, O peers,
Our's is no trivial care; direct your ſight
Along the ranks of that redeemed hoſt;
On us hangs all their ſafety: Night and day
My anxious thoughts are labouring in their cauſe,
And whilſt CHRIST walks the earth I take no reſt,
A watchful ſpy for ever at his ſide,
Noting each word and deed; ſometimes I mix
With the ſelected Twelve that page his ſteps;
Of theſe, though ſome have waver'd, none is falſe
Save one alone, ISCARIOT he by name;
The taint of avarice hath touch'd his heart;
I've mark'd him for my own. Hear, princes, hear!

This

This night the prieſts and elders will convene
Their ſecret conclave: I am in their hearts;
Burning with envy, malice and revenge,
Their only thought is how to tangle CHRIST,
In whom of force I own no guile is found,
But gentleneſs inſtead and perfect truth,
A lamb in nature without ſpot and pure,
Fit victim therefore for their Paſchal rites,
Which now are near at hand; apt is the hour,
Apt are the inſtruments. What now remains
But to ſend forth a tempter to perſuade
ISCARIOT to betray his Maſter's life,
And damn himſelf for gold? Speak, is there one,
One in this patriot circle, whom all eyes
Point out for this emprize? Moſt ſure there is;
BELIAL hath well predicted of our choice:
MAMMON, ſtand forth! On thee th' election lights.
He ſpake, and all approv'd, for choice ſo fit
None could oppoſe; when MAMMON thus replied.
Prince of this world! To whom theſe armies owe,
Loſt but for thee in everlaſting night,
The glorious proſpect of yon riſing ſun,
'Tis not to evade the labor, but prevent
The failure of your hopes, that I beſeech
Your wiſdom to correct it's choice, and lodge

This arduous embaſſy in abler hands:
Nathleſs if ſuch your will, and my compeers
Adjudge me to this ſervice, I ſubmit:
In me is no repugnance, no delay;
For ever what theſe toiling hands could do,
Or patient thoughts deviſe, that I have done;
Whether in heav'n ordain'd to undermine
God's adamantine throne, or doom'd to dig
The ſolid ſulphur of hell's burning ſoil,
Fearleſs I wrought, and, were there no tongues elſe
To vouch my ſervices, theſe ſcars would ſpeak.
How many daintier ſpirits do I ſee
Fair as in heav'n and in freſh bloom of youth,
Whilſt I, with ſhrivel'd ſinews cramp'd and ſcorch'd
'Midſt peſtilential damps and fiery blaſts,
Drag as you ſee a miſerable load,
Age-ſtruck without the laſt reſource of death:
This for myſelf, no more. You're not to know
The ſnares which I employ are golden ſnares;
Theſe are my arts, and like the crafty ſlave,
Who in Rome's Circus hurls the fatal net
Over his fierce purſuer, ſo oft times
Have I entangled the proud hearts of men,
And made their courage ſtoop to ſhameful bribes,
Paid for diſhoneſt deeds, perjuries and plots,

That draw them off from God, who elſe had fill'd
His courts ere now with gueſts and peopled heav'n.
Theſe weapons and theſe hands you ſtill command;
So dear I hold the general cauſe at heart,
So diſciplin'd am I in duty's ſchool,
That reckleſs of all hazard I preſent
Myſelf your ſervant, or, if ſo fate wills,
Your ſacrifice; for though from mortal man
Diſcomfiture I dread not, yet if CHRIST,
Whom the great Tempter foil'd not, ſhall ſtand forth
The champion of his follower, witneſs for me,
You my brave peers and this angelic hoſt,
I ſought not this bold heighth, whence if I fall,
I do but fall where SATAN could not ſtand.
  Go then, exclaim'd th' Arch-Enemy of man,
Go, brave adventurer, go where glory calls:
Auſpicious thoughts engender in my breaſt,
And now prophetic viſions burſt upon me:
I ſee the traitor JUDAS with a band
Of midnight ruffians ſeize his peaceful Lord:
They drag him to the bar, accuſe, condemn;
He bleeds, he dies! Darkneſs involves the reſt.
Aſcend the air, brave ſpirit, and 'midſt the ſhout
Of grateful myriads wing thy courſe to fame.

He ſaid, and pointing to the ſacred towers
Of God's high temple, wav'd his ſceptred hand,
Whereat the infernal armies gave a ſhout
That ſhook the rocky deſart to its baſe:
Meanwhile the fiend, ambaſſador of hell,
Exulting heard his high election crown'd
With theſe applauding voices, and the call
Of his great Chieftain echo'd to the ſkies:
Pride ſwell'd his conſcious breaſt; no longer now
Crouching with age and pain, but nerv'd anew,
As with a ſpell transform'd, erect he ſtood
With towering ſtature talleſt of the throng,
And looks of high ſupremacy and ſtate.
And now from either ſhoulder he unfurl'd
His wide-ſtretch'd pinions, and upriſing ſwift
Tower'd in mid-air; the hoſt with loud acclaim
Hail'd his aſcent; he on the well-pois'd wing
Hover'd awhile, till from his cloudy heighth
Sweeping the wide horizon he deſcried
Far in the weſt the holy city, of God,
His deſtin'd port, then to the orient ſun
Turn'd his broad vans, and plied their utmoſt ſpeed.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND BOOK.

Mammon, alighting on the Holy Mount, aſſumes the form and character of a Levite, and under that appearance goes in ſearch of Judas Iſcariot. He meets that diſciple moſt opportunely for his purpoſe in a ſolitary place, and entering into converſation with him, pretends a commiſſion from the prieſts and elders for engaging him in their ſervice with the promiſe of a reward, and urges many inſidious arguments for detaching him from his Maſter: They ſeparate with a promiſe on the part of Judas to report his final anſwer to the prieſts that evening. Chriſt is now brought to view ſitting in the midſt of his diſciples at his Laſt Supper: He addreſſes them in thoſe ſolemn and affecting terms recorded in the Goſpel of Saint John, waſhes their feet, foretells his death, and points out to them his betrayer in the perſon of Judas then preſent: The traitor, perceiving himſelf diſcovered, haſtily departs. Chriſt, pitying the affliction of his diſciples, tenderly conſoles them with the promiſe of his ſupport under their future tribulations, and concludes with an aweful invocation to the Father in their behalf: whereupon, warning them that his hour is come, he goes forth to the garden. A reflection, naturally ſpringing from the ſubject, addreſſed to unbelievers, cloſes the book.

CALVARY.

BOOK II.

THE LAST SUPPER.

NOW on the conſecrated Mount of God
MAMMON, inviſible to mortal eye,
Stooping the wing from his aerial heighth
With feet unhallow'd lands; a direful peſt,
Fartheſt from heav'n of all that outcaſt crew,
Who fell from bliſs; fit meſſenger was he,
And fatal was their choice, who ſent him forth
To work corruption's purpoſe in man's heart;
For in his pow'r excelling he can take
The ſemblance of each virtue, ſhift each form,
And turn and turn new faces on the world,
Till he hath ſnar'd a ſoul; then he appears
In nature as he is, loathſome, obſcene,
Rapacious as thoſe filthy monſters feign'd
By fabling poets of amphibious breed,

Harpies,

Harpies, of earth and ocean the foul ſpawn,
Half brute, half human, with cadaverous face
Horribly pale, and hollow hungry eye,
Glaring aghaſt, with wings outſtretch'd to chace
And talons crook'd to pounce their mangled prey.
And now by dev'liſh ſpell transform'd he ſeems
A reverend Levite, bearded to the waiſt;
Hypocriſy ne'er wore a graver maſk:
And ſtill with wolf-like watch he prowls around,
If haply in thoſe haunts he might ſurprize
Occaſion to put forth his damning arts,
And from the flock of their good Shepherd cull
One tainted ſtraggler, one, whoſe ſordid ſoul
Avarice might tempt to take the price of blood,
And ſacrifice the Son of God for gold:
Of CHRIST no care had he, but to elude
His vigilance, which ſtill was all his dread;
Nor of the Twelve, ſave JUDAS, was there one
Whom to aſſail; on him alone, on him,
Son of perdition, reſted all the hopes
Of SATAN and his legions. Now the fiend
With ineffectual ſearch had coaſted all
The ſacred region round, and in the ſhade
Beneath the temple porch awhile repos'd,
Liſt'ning the converſe of the idle crowd,

The ſun then high at noon; and much they talk'd
Of CHRIST and his great miracles, of ſome
Elias deem'd, of ſome the Baptiſt John
Ris'n from the dead, but by all tongues confeſt
A prophet mighty both in word and deed:
Silent the whilſt in ſecret muſings wrapt
The wizard ſpirit ſtood, when all at once
Loud voices ſtrike his ear, and ſtrait comes one
Leaping and bounding 'midſt the ſhouting throng,
A cripple new reſtor'd; the very bed,
Which from his birth the palſied wretch had preſs'd,
Now in it's turn was carried, and to all
Triumphantly expos'd: Behold, he cried,
The token of my cure; I am the man
Whom ye all knew, and this the doleful bed,
On which, faſt bound in miſery and pain,
Helpleſs before your charitable gates
I laid and begg'd for pity and relief:
Lo! I am free! Mark how theſe new-found limbs
Nimbly the health-reſtoring voice obey!
CHRIST gave the word; he ſpake and I am whole.
This whilſt he heard, conviction ſmote the fiend;
His conſcious heart a ſudden tremor ſeiz'd
And off he ſlunk abaſh'd: A winding path
Led down the mount, and here as he purſued

In gloomy thought his ſolitary way,
Behold by happy chance the man he ſought,
ISCARIOT and alone: Joy flufh'd the cheek
Of the incarnate dæmon, thus to find
His labour in auſpicious moment crown'd.
  Hail, ſon of Simon! peace be to thee, friend!
Fairly encounter'd art thou in good hour,
The prieſt-like Tempter cried; thy worth is known
To all our Levites, from whoſe tribe I come
With friendly greeting charg'd: This night they meet
In ſpecial conclave; our chief pontiff there
Will in the holy convocation move
Points of high import to our antient law,
Queſtions it much importeth thee to hear,
And well accepted ſhalt thou be of all,
Who with large recompence and honors due
Will greet thee ſo complying: I have ſaid.
  Grave Sir, I know thee not, JUDAS replied;
Yet for thy greeting thanks, and peace for peace,
As holy men becomes. To him the fiend,
  Unknown I well may be, who night and day
Serving God's altar rarely ſtir abroad,
And little commerce hold with this great world;
But thee I know one of that Teacher's train,
Who walks at large, nor ſhuns the haunts impure

Of

Of ſinners and of publicans: Alas!
That one of thy wiſe bearing ſhould be ſeen
In ſuch baſe fellowſhip, paging his ſteps,
Calling him Lord and Maſter, whom the world
In mere deriſion ſuffers to grow up
To full-blown vanity, at once to cruſh.
But good report is pregnant with thy name,
As one exempted from the general ſcorn;
And ſure I am thou wilt not ſo abaſe
And lower thy nobler thoughts to one ſo mean,
Vile and mechanic; to the driv'ling crew
Of children and of women leave that taſk,
To Peter and his brethren of the net:
Fine reas'ning we ſhall have, and well be ſchool'd,
When fiſhermen turn preachers and inſtill
Doctrines and laws, which Moſes never taught.
Woe to our ſcribes! Rare mockery of the world
And the world's wiſdom, if theſe ſimple folk,
Lur'd from their daily drudgery, ſhould ſet up
Fiſhers of men; the ſynagogue, to them
A barren element, will never yield
Such gainful earnings as the ſea affords.
And what is CHRIST, that JUDAS ſo ſhould court
His ſtarving ſervice? What ſo tempting lure
Hath this deceiver to beguile thy hopes?

Not of this world my kingdom, he hath ſaid;
Yet of this world are we, in this alone
We live and move, here only we expect
Or pain or pleaſure, all that lies beyond
In the unknown abyſs is dark as death.
And wherefore carrieſt thou that bag about?
A beggar needs no treaſurer, and thy Lord
Feeds but by miracle: Alas for him,
Who ſerves a maſter, that keeps Sabbath faſts
Forty long days in the bare wilderneſs,
Makes poverty his paſſport into heav'n,
And bids us throw away life's preſent means
For doubtful chance of intereſt after life!
And art thou of all reaſon ſo bereft
As to account proſperity a crime,
Or think none bleſt but him, whoſe every ſtep
Through miſery's thorny path is mark'd with blood?
O ſon of Simon, take thy laſt reſolve;
Either reſign thy body to the worm,
And die with CHRIST, or him renounce, and live
Rich, honor'd, proſperous, and enjoy the world.
The Fiend now paus'd, well pleas'd that he had gain'd
Audience ſo large; when JUDAS, in whoſe ſoul
The pois'nous inſtillation 'gan to work,
Thus to corruption's advocate replied.

That

That CHRIST, rejected and deſpis'd of men,
Hath in this world no part I freely grant;
Therefore if we his followers, who renounce
Things preſent, build our hopes upon a dream
Of what ſhall never come, we are of all
Moſt miſerable; if we, who bid farewel
To all that Nature holds moſt dear to ſhare
Sorrows and pains and poverty with CHRIST,
Find not thoſe bliſsful manſions in the heav'n
Which he hath promis'd; if, when all is paſt
And this ſad ſcene concludes, no reck'ning comes,
No grateful compenſation after death,
Hard is our fate, and much hath he abus'd
Our weak credulity; but ſtill theſe hopes
Of an expected glory, though with doubt
And darkneſs clouded, faint yet not extinct,
Yield not to words; words made them what they are,
CHRIST's words, and ſurely man ne'er ſpake like him;
Wherefore if theſe your doctors of the law
Invite me to their conclave but to hear
A railing accuſation, I hold off
From their aſſembly, and to CHRIST adhere,
As to the better reas'ner; and though poor
The ſervant, equal is the Maſter's lot,
Poor as the pooreſt, houſeleſs and forlorn,

A man of ſorrows; nor can we complain,
Whilſt he of all we ſuffer ſtill partakes,
Firſt in all labours, penances and pains.
You aſk, and bid me take my laſt reſolve,
If I will give this body to the worm
And die with CHRIST: To die is Nature's dread;
Inſtinctively ſhe loaths the gloomy grave,
And turns a longing eye to light and life;
But fortune gives to all things their degrees;
To them, who baſk in ſunſhine thro' the day,
Night comes with double ſadneſs, whilſt to me,
Who toil from morn to noon, from noon to eve,
Yet nothing but a dim horizon ſee
Low'ring in clouds, darkneſs is nothing ſtrange,
Nor death a terror: Wealth preſents no dower
To wed me to the world; no pleaſures cling
Around my heart; no ſoft affections woo
My longer ſtay on earth, there to prefer
Brief joys poſſeſs'd to hope of future bliſs.
Thus whilſt he 'plain'd the ſubtle Tempter's ear
Caught the ſoft murmur that betrays the ſoul,
The ſigh capitulating virtue breathes,
When from her laſt defences ſhe retreats;
Whereat a bolder tone he now aſſum'd,
And thus the wav'ring falſe diſciple plied.

All

All joys that gold can purchaſe wait your choice;
Rich to your heart's ambition you ſhall be,
Nor only rich, but reſcued from a doom
So dreadful, had you all the wealth in ſtore,
Which the ſea covers or the earth contains,
'Twere well beſtow'd to purchaſe your redemption.
With CHRIST impending death, with me you meet
Life with encircling pleaſures. Throw aſide
That beggar's purſe, your ſtarving office ſpurn;
Serve God's high prieſt, whoſe treaſury is full;
Caſt thoſe few mites away, the ſcanty dole
Of ſome contaminating leper's hand,
For which you bid God heal him and paſs on;
Whilſt he, good cred'lous ſoul, cries out amain,
As powerful fancy works, Lo! I am clean;
Behold a miracle! But gold performs
Greater and happier miracles than this:
Gold with a touch can heal the mind's diſeaſe,
Quicken the ſlow-pac'd blood, and make it dance
In tides of rapture through each thrilling vein;
Caſt out that worſt of dæmons, poverty,
And with a ſpell exorciſe the ſad heart,
Haunted with ſpectres of deſpair and ſpleen.
If then this prize can tempt thee, if thy ſoul
Still thirſts for life, for riches, for repoſe,

If in thy breaſt there dwells that manly ſcorn,
Which ſlighted merit feels, when envious pride
Thruſts it aſide to build th' unworthy up,
Now, now aſſert it; from a Maſter turn,
Who turns from thee, who before thee exalts
Thy meaner brethren, Peter, James and John:
On them his partial ſmile for ever beams,
They have his love, his confidence, his heart;
Of them revolting he might well complain,
Of thee he cannot; thine were juſt revenge:
He is no traitor, who reſents a wrong;
Who ſhares no confidence, can break no truſt.
Bid conſcience then be ſtill, let no weak qualms
Damp thy reviving ſpirit; but when night
Wraps her dark curtain round this buſy world,
Come thou to CAIAPHAS; there will be found
Our prieſts and ſcribes in council to attaint
And bring to judgment this preſumptuous man,
Who boaſts himſelf Meſſias Son of God.
If thou, to whom his midnight haunts are known,
His ſecret incantations and his ſpells,
By which he does thoſe feats that cheat our ſight,
Wilt to thoſe guilty haunts conduct our guard,
And render up his perſon to the law,
Much praiſe and large reward ſhalt thou receive;

If thou wilt not—But wherefore ſhould I doubt?
I would perſuade, not threaten: Know withal
It is not thou, 'tis juſtice gives the blow;
The law will have its victim. Thinkeſt thou
That we, to whom the cuſtody is given
Of God's prophetic oracles, ordain'd
To guard his worſhip and expound his laws,
Will let this innovating Teacher ſpurn
Our holy order, mock our ancient rites,
Prophane our Sabbaths, and himſelf exalt
Co-equal with Jehovah, to confound
His unity, and claim divided power?
No, let death arbitrate 'twixt him and us;
If he be very CHRIST, death ſhall not dare
To aim his dart at immortality;
His incorruption ſhall defy the grave:
If man, blaſpheming man, he juſtly dies.
Living or dying thus his fate diſpells
All myſtery; truth ſtarts of force to light,
And God is glorified in either caſe.
He ceas'd, and on the Traitor fix'd a look,
Which, like the ſerpent's faſcinating eye,
Gaz'd motion's power away; ſullen he ſtood,
As with a ſpell entranc'd; the aweful ſenſe
Of his great Maſter's virtue and the dread

Of an hereafter terrible to thought,
No longer ſerv'd to hold the wizard fiend
And his fell arts at bay: The word of truth,
Sown on the ſurface of his ſtony heart,
Had periſh'd without root; religion's lamp,
Faint and more faint as MAMMON's crafty breath
Blew up the ſtorm of paſſion, now expir'd
In his benighted ſoul; there rankling pride,
Malicious envy, avarice and revenge,
Leagu'd with hell's miniſter and uncontroul'd
Their impious orgies held. At length the wretch,
To calm deliberate treachery reſign'd,
With all th' unrighteous Mammon in his heart
And vile prevarication on his lips,
Thus with conſent in dubious phraſe implied
The grand ſeducer of mankind diſmiſs'd.
Great is the peril of the attempt you urge,
For great the power of him you would deſtroy:
Therefore if I demand ſome pauſe for thought,
Deem it not much. Your offers ſhall be weigh'd;
But now no more: Occaſions call me hence;
This night the Maſter hath convok'd the Twelve
To keep the ſacred feaſt, ordain'd of God
With bread unleaven'd and the Paſchal lamb:
Thither, tho' laſt and in his favor leaſt,

I go,

I go, a cited gueſt: There whilſt I ſit
Unnotic'd at his table's loweſt foot,
My meditations ſhall recall your words,
And ponder them apart. Say to your prieſts,
Thoſe conſervators of our ancient law,
This night they may expect my laſt reſolve.
And now behold the length'ning ſhadow marks
The ev'ning hour, that warns me hence: Farewell!
This ſaid, their conf'rence ended, they embrace
As friends, who plight their faith: Upon the touch,
So quick th' infection ran, ſo dire the blight,
The pois'nous ferment on the inſtant reach'd
ISCARIOT's tainted heart, and now he burnt
With the fell luſt of gold. Joy ſeiz'd the Fiend;
For well he knew how mortal to the ſoul
That deadly aconite, the growth of hell.
Oh! wretch for ever loſt, for ever curſt,
Whom Mammon thus embraces! Who ſhall wake
Thy conſcience from its lethargy? Who now
Shall ſtop the courſes of that baneful drug,
And ſtem the ſwift deſtruction? 'Tis too late:
Better for thee hadſt thou ne'er ſeen the light,
Or loſt it ere this fatal hour had birth.
Thy doom is ſeal'd; hell hath its hour of joy,
Thou, traitor, an eternity of woe:

The meditation of thy heart ſhall hurl
Thee to perdition and thy Lord to death.
Now JUDAS down the mountain turn'd his ſteps;
Not ſo the Tempter; he from the high rock,
Exalted where he ſtood, his impious eye
Glanc'd o'er the city' of God full in his view
From Eaſt to Weſt in moony creſcent ſtretch'd.
Here yet JEHOVAH was ador'd, here reign'd;
All elſe to SATAN and his idol gods
Thro' earth's wide range belong'd; to their dire names
Each temple echo'd, every knee was bow'd:
How oft, ev'n here upon his holy hill,
Did Judah's kings with their polluted groves
Affront God's houſe, and pagan altars raiſe
To Chemos, Milcom, Aſhtaroth and all
The hoſt of heav'n within his ſacred courts!
Witneſs that impious king, who paſs'd his ſon
Through fire to Moloch, homicidal God,
Which rous'd th' Almighty's vengeance, and entail'd
Mournful captivity on all his race.
Hither, as to the delug'd world of old,
In promis'd time the dove of peace was ſent;
Upon this Ararat, his ſacred mount,
He reſted; hence ſalvation dawn'd on man:
Him to deſtroy the Tempter now aſpir'd,

Secure

Secure of his new convert firmly leagu'd
In his dire plot and to perdition ſeal'd:
Nor reſted on that mount the darkling Fiend,
Nor further need had he of prieſtly garb,
Than till he ſaw ISCARIOT join the train
Of CHRIST and his diſciples; then at once
To his own airy properties diſſolv'd
A ſpi'rit inviſible, with eager ſpeed
To hell's aſſembled chiefs he wing'd his flight.
The ſun had ſunk beneath the Weſtern hills,
And now at ev'ning hour the Jews prepare
To celebrate their Paſſover, ordain'd
T' eternize their deliv'rance, when God's wrath
Smote ev'ry firſt-born male in Mizraim's coaſt,
Save where the blood of lamb piacular,
Sprinkling the conſecrated door, was found
Of the deſtroying angel: To this feaſt,
Preluſive of his own pure ſacrifice
And type of his blood-ſhedding, JESUS came:
The gueſts were preſent and the table ſpread;
With loins begirt, as men upon the march,
And ſtaff in hand, they ſnatch a haſty meal:
This done, in penſive meditation rapt,
The Savior, conſcious of impending death,
Sate in the midſt; to his all-preſent mind

The treaſon and the traitor ſtood confeſt.
Low'ring, abaſh'd and from the reſt apart,
ISCARIOT at the table's loweſt foot
Took poſt, where beſt he might eſcape that glance,
From whoſe intelligence no heart could hide
Its guilty meditations: All eyes elſe
Were center'd on the Savior's face divine,
Which with the brightneſs of the Godhead mix'd
Traces of human ſorrow, and diſplay'd
The workings of a mind, where mercy ſeem'd
Struggling to reconcile ſome mortal wrong
To pardon and forbearance: Such a look
Made ſilence ſacred, every tongue was mute;
Ev'n PETER's zeal forbore the vent of words,
Or ſpent itſelf in murmurs half ſuppreſt.
At length the meek REDEEMER rais'd his eyes,
Where gentle reſignation, tempering grief,
Beam'd grace ineffable on all around,
And with theſe words the awful ſilence broke.
Muſe not if I am ſad, nor ſtand aghaſt
As doubtful of my conſtancy; theſe pangs
And more which I muſt ſuffer were foreſeen;
The hour now coming comes not by ſurprize,
It is the conſummation of my charge,
And fills the meaſure of atonement up.

Shall

Shall I then ſay, Father, avert this hour,
And ſave me from theſe agonies? Not ſo.
With heart prepar'd to ſuffer and ſubmit
I meet my doom forewarn'd: Yet ere we part
Take this laſt office from your Maſter's hands;
And when you ſee me ſtoop to waſh your feet,
As ſoon as you ſhall, remember 'tis your Lord,
Your dying Lord this legacy bequeaths,
And edify by his humility.
This ſaid, his ſeamleſs mantle he threw off,
And girt his tunic cloſe about his waiſt;
And now with mute amazement they beheld
The Son of God in ſervant-like attire
Prepar'd to execute his menial taſk.
All gaz'd, all wonder'd, but no voice oppos'd;
None dar'd to pray forbearance of the deed,
Till he, whoſe heart was ever on his lips,
PETER, in warm expoſtulation cried:
Lord, doſt thou waſh my feet, thy ſervant's feet,
Mean as the duſt he treads on? Never, Lord,
Never ſhalt thou do that for one ſo vile,
So all-unworthy: That be far from thee!
Such homage ill beſeemeth thee to pay,
Me to receive.—To him the Lord replied:

PETER,

PETER, as yet thou know'ſt not what I do,
Hereafter thou ſhalt know; therefore no more:
Ceaſe to oppoſe, for if I waſh thee not,
With me thou haſt no part.—Struck to the ſoul
With horror at the thought, his eager words,
Wing'd with the flame of rhapſody, burſt forth:
Oh! not my feet alone, my hands, my head,
Waſh me all o'er, and ſanctify each part.
There needs not this, the meek REDEEMER cried,
Enough is done; thus waſh'd, though but in part,
Thou ſhalt be clean throughout: Yet I'll not ſay
Ye are all clean: Spite of the Shepherd's care
The taint hath touch'd his flock. Alas! for him
On whom the foul contamination lights;
Woe to that wretch that ever he was born!
And do ye need a comment to expound
This leſſon of humility and love?
Ye call me Lord and Maſter; well ye ſay,
For ſuch in truth I am; if then your Lord
Be meek and lowly, will not ye renounce
Pride and contention? If the Maſter ſtoops
To waſh his feet who ſerves, ſhall ye do leſs
To theſe your equal brethren? Learn of me,
And each with other deal, as I with you:

Write

Write on your hearts my words; the time draws nigh
When I ſhall ſpeak no more with you on earth:
Ye have all heard; how bleſt if ye obey!
I ſpeak not of you all: Whilſt here ye ſit
In ſeeming fellowſhip around my board,
Sharing this ſocial meal, my laſt on earth,
Doubt not but I can ſearch into your breaſts,
And ſee whoſe hearts are loyal, whoſe is falſe;
And mark me well, I fall not by man's wiles,
Not unpredicted is the trait'rous act,
And well I know the wretch, whoſe faithleſs hand
Dips with me in the diſh, ſhall ſoon be dy'd
With my devoted blood. Betray'd I am,
Deceiv'd I cannot be.——This when they heard,
Each with the other interchang'd a look
Of queſtion and ſuſpect; ſpeechleſs they ſtar'd,
Confounded and aghaſt: As men drawn forth
For decimation tremble to unfold
The lot of life or death, ſo theſe in doubt
On whom the word of prophecy might light,
Curious yet fearful to enquire of CHRIST,
Search'd their own hearts in ſilence. All perceiv'd
Omniſcience, which to God alone belongs,
Familiar with their thoughts, and every ſoul,
Save that dire wretch whom conſcience inly ſmote,

Trembled leſt unpremeditated guilt
Might be denounc'd upon him, or the ſin
Of one man, as of Korah, move the Lord
With the whole congregation to be wroth.
But PETER, in whoſe ever-anxious mind
Theſe terrors undiſpell'd long could not dwell,
To the belov'd Diſciple, on the breaſt
Of CHRIST reclining, now gave ſign to aſk
The fearful queſtion, in what traitor's heart
Plot ſo accurs'd could harbour. Thus beſought,
Though much his humble nature fear'd offence,
In accent ſoft, with ſupplicating eye
Turn'd on the Maſter, the meek ſuitor ſaid:
Lord, ſhew thy true and faithful ſervants grace,
And let us know the traitor.—He it is,
JESUS replied, on whom I ſhall beſtow
This ſop, when I have dipp'd it in my cup.
He ſaid, and as he plung'd the morſel in,
All eyes were fix'd upon the fatal work,
Wond'ring on whom he would beſtow the ſpell;
And ſoon with ſilent horror they beheld
The ſaturated ſop to JUDAS giv'n,
Pledge of perdition; he with greedy haſte
Devour'd it, by the fiend within him urg'd;
For MAMMON to the dark divan had told

The joyful tidings, and had poſted back
Swift as the magic whirlwind conjur'd up
By all hell's wizard imps could drive him on,
And now ſate neſtling in the traitor's heart,
Brooding his filthy ſpawn: Great was the joy
Of the infernal tempter, thus to find
That guardian Pow'r, whoſe providence he fear'd,
By theſe ſymbolic elements withdrawn,
And his apoſtate victim now caſt out
From the Lord's Supper, alien from God's grace,
And ſoul-ſurrender'd to hell's gloomy realm.
Now, as the ſpell within him 'gan to work,
The traitor's viſage, like the troubled ſea
Uptorn and furrow'd with tempeſtuous winds,
Shifted it's hues, now deadly pale, aghaſt
And horror-ſtruck, now fiery red, deform'd
With helliſh rage, and from man's ſemblance chang'd
To very dæmon, terrible to ſight.
Oh! what a fall from heav'n to deeper hell
Than thought can fathom, horrors worſe than heart
Of man, unleſs abandon'd of his God,
Can ſuffer or conceive! Words do but fail
To paint that unreveal'd abyſs, thoſe depths
Of the immeaſu'rable profound, where groans,

Wailings and woes and toſſings amidſt fires
Unquenchable await the wretch condemn'd!
Meanwhile in cloudleſs majeſty and mild
The Savior's face divine on all around
Effulgent beam'd; about his temples ſhone
A radiant glory: This when JUDAS ſaw,
Whom now the ſpi'rit of darkneſs had poſſeſs'd,
And none ſuch in the ſphere of that pure light
Long could abide, he ſtarted from his couch
Prepar'd for flight, when thus in few the Lord—
Go then! and what thou haſt in hand to do,
Do quickly; ſo depart!—The word of power,
Though gentle yet commanding, JUDAS heard,
And inſtantly the ſpirit took him thence;
Nor could he not obey, for ſo rebuk'd
The prince of hell, SATAN himſelf, had fled.
The faithful remnant ſate in mute ſuſpenſe,
Pondering what this diſmiſſion might import.
The Maſter with a glance diſcern'd their thoughts;
He ſaw them in profound conjecture loſt,
Humbled in heart and ſad, their honor ſtain'd
By baſe defection, and their faith convuls'd:
When thus, at once to ſtrengthen and conſole
Their wav'ring minds, theſe healing words he ſpake.

Let

Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe
In God, believe alſo in me his Son.
Doubt not but in the compaſs of the heav'ns
My Father will provide for all his Saints
Manſions of peace, ſeats of eternal bliſs,
Where ſpi'rits made perfect after death ſhall dwell,
And reſt from earthly toils: Thither I go
To ſeal your ſure election, and prepare
For you my faithful ſervants an abode;
That, as in ſorrow here, ſo there in bliſs
With me your Lord, now dying for your ſakes,
Ye may ſurmount the grave, and ever live
In heavenly communion undiſturb'd.
Lament not therefore if I now depart,
Your provident precurſor, for ye know
Whither I go, and alſo know the way.
Lord, we are ignorant and dim-ſighted men,
THOMAS replied, we ſee not what thou ſee'ſt;
And as it ſtands not in our reach to gueſs
Whither thou go'ſt, how ſhould we know the way?
I am the way, th' inſpired Teacher cried,
I am the Truth, the Life: None can approach
The Father but by me; me had ye known,
This blindneſs had been done away, and now
Behold Him preſent!—Where? ſtill doubting cried

One of th' aſtoniſh'd number; Oh! impart
That intellectual viſion to diſcern
And ſee the Father; ſet Him in our view
In form demonſtrative; we aſk no more.
Say'ſt thou? reſum'd the Lord, and have I been
So long familiar yet ſo little known?
Will not the works, O PHILIP, I have done,
Done in thy ſight, inſtruct thee whence I am,
And what my power? Doth there need light for this?
'Midſt the broad blaze of proofs that ſhines about thee
Can'ſt thou not ſee God's preſence in his power?
Of this mortality which ye behold,
This fleſhly ſelf, I ſpeak not; 'tis the Spirit,
The virtue of my Father, which is in me,
In act how viſible, in voice how ſtrong,
Clear and expreſs! And can you ſee and hear
And yet withhold belief? Oh, ſlow of faith!
If words cannot perſuade, let works convince:
If miracles, which only God can do,
Are done before your eyes, how ſay you then,
Shew us the Father? Sanctify your hearts
From fear and terror; though the hour comes on,
When to the ſilent manſions of the dead
From this impeni'tent world I muſt withdraw,
Mourn not, but let your grief be turn'd to joy;

For

For as in me the Father, ſo in Him
I live and move; my Spirit, though unſeen
Still preſent, ſhall protect and hover o'er you.
I will not leave you comfortleſs; my name
Shall be your tower of refuge; with my peace
Now dying I endow you; of that peace
The powers of this world never ſhall deſpoil you,
And in my Name whatever ye ſhall aſk
Believing, ye ſhall have: By faith in me
Ye ſhall command the elements, uplift
The everlaſting mountains by their roots,
And whelm them in the centre of the ſea:
This in my Name potential ye ſhall do,
And greater works than this: By faith in me
Ye ſhall confront th' oppreſſor; 'midſt the ſhock
Of tribulations and the angry ſcorn
Of a malignant world, abhorr'd, deſpis'd,
Thruſt from their ſynagogues, ye ſhall poſſeſs
Your ſouls in patience, glorying to endure
Like tribulation with your martyr'd Lord.
Deſpair not therefore, for before that day
A Comforter ſhall come, whom I will ſend,
And he ſhall teach you all things. When ye ſtand
Before the judgment ſeat of impious men
Friendleſs, accus'd, environ'd with a throng,

One of th' aſtoniſh'd number; Oh! impart
That intellectual viſion to diſcern
And ſee the Father; ſet Him in our view
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Still preſent, ſhall protect and hover o'er you.
I will not leave you comfortleſs; my name
Shall be your tower of refuge; with my peace
Now dying I endow you; of that peace
The powers of this world never ſhall deſpoil you,
And in my Name whatever ye ſhall aſk
Believing, ye ſhall have: By faith in me
Ye ſhall command the elements, uplift
The everlaſting mountains by their roots,
And whelm them in the centre of the ſea:
This in my Name potential ye ſhall do,
And greater works than this: By faith in me
Ye ſhall confront th' oppreſſor; 'midſt the ſhock
Of tribulations and the angry ſcorn
Of a malignant world, abhorr'd, deſpis'd,
Thruſt from their ſynagogues, ye ſhall poſſeſs
Your ſouls in patience, glorying to endure
Like tribulation with your martyr'd Lord.
Deſpair not therefore, for before that day
A Comforter ſhall come, whom I will ſend,
And he ſhall teach you all things. When ye ſtand
Before the judgment ſeat of impious men
Friendleſs, accus'd, environ'd with a throng

Of perjur'd witneſſes athirſt for blood,
Your Guardian Spirit ſhall provide a voice,
Action and eloquence, and prompt your lips
With untaught languages to ſound my Name
With tongue miraculous through all the world.
Wars then and rumors and portentous ſigns,
Famine and earthquakes and diſaſtrous plagues
Shall vex the nations; prophets ſhall ariſe
With lying divinations to confound
The weak, pervert the wavering and perplex
The very Saints themſelves. Await the time;
Theſe are but harbingers of mightier woes;
The day of terror is but in it's dawn:
The powers of earth and heav'n muſt undergo
Direful convulſion; this majeſtic pile,
This temple, ſhall become ſo mere a wreck,
That not one ſtone ſhall reſt upon another:
Then ſhall your hour of tribulation come;
Then to confeſs my Name ſhall be your crime
By torture and by death to be aton'd:
The tyrants of the world ſhall then let looſe
Their perſecuting rage, and great ſhall be
The falling-off of many; rocks and caves
Shall be your hiding-places, yet from thence
Your ſound ſhall echo to the fartheſt ends

Of the redeemed earth; from thoſe dark cells
The beams of revelation ſhall break forth,
Maugre the pow'rs of hell; and bleſt is he,
Whoſe faith unſhaken ſhall abide the time,
Till the great end and conſummation comes
My peace and my ſalvation to enſure.
Few are the moments now and paſſing ſwift,
Which thus converſing we have yet in hand.
Servants no more, henceforth I call you friends;
Therefore, as friends and children, let your love
Each to the other knit your hearts together
In brotherly communion; this command,
New to the world, I give you: Let good will,
And peace and concord harmonize your ſouls,
And mark you as the followers of him,
Whoſe every act was charity, whoſe life
Was ſpent and clos'd expiring for your ſakes:
And ſtronger proof of love what man can give,
Than to yield up his body to the grave,
And die, as ſhortly I ſhall, for his friends?
Time was that I have ſhadow'd out my ſpeech
In proverbs and alluſions; time now is
To caſt obſcurity aſide and ſhew
Th' unveiled glories of the Father to you.
Henceforward ye ſhall aſk of Him and have;

My Name for your petitions ſhall ſuffice;
My prayers ye need not, for the Father's love
Without an interceſſor ſhall protect
Mine, as you love me, and prevent your wants.
From Him I came into this world, to Him,
This world now leaving, I again return.
This ſaid, conviction ſmote their glowing hearts
With faith, and hope's bright image new inſpir'd,
And ſcenes of future glory beaming on them:
When thus with voices join'd in loud acclaim
CHRIST in the Godhead manifeſt they hail'd.
Now, Lord, we hear and underſtand thy words,
Plain words and not in parables involv'd:
Now are we ſure all knowledge is reveal'd,
All pow'r committed to thee from above,
And without further queſtion we believe
And henceforth know thou cameſt forth from God.
Do ye at length believe? the Maſter cried;
Behold, the hour comes on, yea now is come,
When your ſtrong faith ſhall ſtagger at the ſcene
Of theſe impending horrors, and ſhrink back
Confounded and appall'd; to the four winds,
Wide as your fears can ſpread you, all ſhall fly,
And leave me ſtruggling with a ſtorm of woes
Unfriended and alone; what did I ſay?

Alone

Alone I cannot be, for in me dwells
The Father ever preſent: Let this thought
Arm you with conſtancy to meet the ſhock
Of tribulation, and withſtand the powers
Of this brief world; for to your comfort know,
I have o'ercome the world. This ſaid, he paus'd,
And ſate, whilſt all were huſh'd, as one entranc'd,
So faſt the heav'nly viſion pour'd upon him:
Then with uplifted eyes and heaving breaſt,
Full of his God, this ſolemn pray'r breath'd forth.
O Father! give thy glory to the Son,
As he hath glorified thy Name on earth,
And theſe, whom thou haſt giv'n him, taught to know
Thee, the true God alone, and JESUS CHRIST
Thy meſſenger and advocate with thee
For loſt mankind. Father! To me reſtore
That glory, which was mine before all time,
Or e'er the world was made and man fell off
From his obedience, now at length redeem'd
From ſin by my atonement, and made heir
Of life eternal, purchas'd with my blood.
The act of mediation is complete;
Thy work is finiſh'd and thy Name gone forth
To theſe of thine election: Thine they were,

To me thou gav'ſt them, and they have receiv'd
And kept as faithful witneſſes thy Word.
For them I pray: The world, which now I leave,
Hath no more part in me; for them alone,
Not for the world, I pray; they muſt abide,
I ſhall depart and be at peace with Thee.
O holy Father! keep them in thy Name
Whole and entire, link'd in the bond of faith,
Firm as I hold them. One alone is loſt,
Son of perdition; him the prophets ſaw
In their proſpective viſions, and foretold
That ſo thy Son ſhould ſuffer; but for theſe,
They are unſtain'd, they ſtand not in the guilt
And condemnation of that wretch accurſt.
I pray thee not to take them from the world,
Through which I ſend them forth as ſhining lights
To draw men's eyes and hearts, and guide their ſearch
To the bright ſource, whence thy ſalvation beams.
Theſe are my miniſters, as I am thine:
Oh! ſanctify them through thy truth! For them,
And all through them converted to thy word,
Father! I pray. Tranſlate them in thy time
From this unquiet world to that high ſtate
Of heav'nly bliſs, where they may dwell with me

And ſee my glory: So ſhall they receive
Thy love, through me transfus'd into their hearts,
And reſt from all their ſorrows in thy peace.
So ſpake the Lord, and with theſe gracious words
His faithful remnant cheer'd, for ſoft they fell
As heav'n's bleſt dew upon the thirſty hills,
And ſweet the healing balm, which they diſtill'd
On ſorrow-wounded ſouls.—Now treach'rous eve
Crept ſilent on, and threw her duſky veil
O'er Nature's face, maſking the deeds of men:
The Savior roſe, for in his conſcious breaſt
A warning voice had whiſper'd, Up, ariſe,
Go forth to death! One ſolemn act remains,
One ſacrifice; 'tis now God's wrath demands
Atonement, a whole world's redemption now
Hangs on the minute's point. Behold him then,
A voluntary victim, leading forth
His ſad diſciples to the fatal ſpot,
Where treaſon lurk'd in ambuſh for his life,
Where ſtood the prince of darkneſs and his pow'rs
Arm'd with commiſſion'd terrors to aſſail
Him ſingle, him forſaken, him oppos'd
To myriads, whilſt Heav'n's angels ſoar'd aloof
Trembling ſpectators of th' unequal ſtrife.
Who now ſo comfortleſs as God's own Son?

His ſoul in woes unutterable whelm'd,
All commerce with its native heav'n denied,
Preſs'd down to earth; nor other ſtrength had he,
Than in his human nature might be found,
To combat more than human agonies,
Accumulated pangs, which all the ſins
Of all the world, from loſs of Paradiſe
By man's firſt fall to the laſt damning page
Of heav'n's black regiſter, had pil'd upon him,
The maſs of ages. Oh! what tongue can ſpeak
The love of our REDEEMER? And yet man,
Ingrateful impious man, hourly reviles
His Benefactor's name, affects the ſtyle
Of ſophiſtry and metaphyſic pride
To quibble with ſalvation, and renounce
Thoſe guides, that lead us by the hand to heav'n.
This they call reaſon, this man's natural right
To queſtion his Creator, and in pride
Of independant dignity reject
Salvation, rather than conſent to own
God's privilege to ſave him by ſuch means
As to God's wiſdom beſt and meeteſt ſeem'd.
Such monſters doth this teeming earth produce:
Impious audacity! which dares to ſay—
I need no Mediator, I diſclaim

CHRIST and his offer'd peace; 'twixt God and me
I want no advocate to plead my cauſe,
By my own rectitude I ſtand or fall:
The Evangelic Volumes I regard
As fabricated tales of juggling tricks,
Witneſs'd by none but partners in the craft:
Deep read in pagan ſtory I confront
The ſacred records with the ſilent page
Of thoſe, who regiſter no ſtrange eclipſe,
No noon-day darkneſs, not one friendly groan
Of ſympathiſing Nature to atteſt
CHRIST's dying hour.——Shut, ſhut the Book of Life
Go to the Jews, the Pagans, for thy creed,
Go to the duſt, blaſphemer! In the ear
Of Death whiſper thy doubts, and learn of him
Thy folly's confutation and thy doom
In thoſe ſad realms, to which he ſhall conduct
Thy trembling ſoul, when the Arch-angel's trump
Hath ſummon'd thee to judgment, and ſet ope
The grave, thy raſhneſs deem'd for ever clos'd.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD BOOK.

Iſcariot, having ſeparated himſelf from Chriſt, wanders through the ſtreets of the city in a diſconſolate manner, and at length arrives at the brook Cedron without the gates. Here he breaks forth into ſoliloquy, in which, after reviewing his paſt ſituation, he affects to juſtify his preſent motives for betraying his Maſter to the prieſts. Chriſt and his diſciples, proceeding to the Mount of Olives, are diſcovered by him as they are paſſing the brook in their way thither, and Judas reſolves upon availing himſelf of the opportunity for delivering Chriſt into the hands of his enemies. In the mean time the prieſts and elders aſſemble in the palace of Caiaphas, and there hold a council upon the meaſures to be purſued for the apprehenſion of Chriſt: The high prieſt harangues the aſſembly to this immediate purport: In the interim Judas is announced, and being admitted makes his propoſal to the council; this produces ſome obſervations on the part of Caiaphas, and is objected to by Nicodemus, who after delivering his opinion quits the aſſembly. Caiaphas then takes up the matter afreſh, controverts the ſentiments of Nicodemus, and with the approbation of all preſent cloſes with the propoſals of Judas, and ſends out a company with that traiterous diſciple to the Mount of Olives, there to apprehend the perſon of Chriſt. The aſſembly breaks up, and the hall is no ſooner evacuated by the prieſts and elders, than their ſeats are filled by Satan and his infernal ſpirits. Satan addreſſes to them a congratulatory ſpeech on the ſucceſs of Mammon's temptation, on whom he beſtows many high encomiums; an ovation takes place in honor of that dæmon, when Chemos appears wounded by the ſpear of Gabriel, whom he had encountered on the Mount of Olives, where he had been poſted as a ſpy upon the motions of Chriſt and his diſciples. Satan, enraged at the account, ſallies forth with a reſolution to revenge the attack by puniſhing the temerity of Gabriel, arms himſelf for the occaſion, and after much proud vaunting of his ſuperior proweſs diſappears, and the infernal ſpirits diſperſe.

CALVARY.

BOOK III.

THE TREASON OF JUDAS.

DARK came the ev'ning on, and the pale moon,
Now faintly glimm'ring through a wint'ry cloud,
Shed her dim horrors o'er the ſhadowy earth;
Whilſt through the ſilent ſtreets with ſtep diſturb'd,
And heart by helliſh meditations rent,
The Outcaſt of the Lord purſued his way,
ISCARIOT, name for evermore accurſt.
Onward he went unqueſtion'd, unobſerv'd,
For all upon this ſolemn night kept houſe,
Nor ſtopp'd till forth the city gates he came
To Cedron's brook, whoſe bubbling current laves
The olive-crowned Mount, favor'd of CHRIST
For its umbrageous groves and ſilent haunts,
For pray'r and contemplation fit retreat.
Here firſt, as one awaken'd to new thoughts,

Starting he check'd his ſtep, and with a groan,
That rent his lab'ring boſom, thus broke forth.
Oh, my torn heart! Oh, ſoul-tormenting ſcenes!
Can I forget the bliſsful hours I've paſs'd
Beneath your ſhades liſt'ning the Maſter's words?
When as he ſpake of heav'n and heav'nly joys,
Of righteouſneſs and the bleſt Spi'rits with God,
Such life in his deſcription glow'd, methought
All Paradiſe was preſent to my view
And courted me to enter. Heav'n and earth!
Muſt I remember? Never man like him
Could with ſuch magic eloquence entrance
The ſenſes of his hearers, lift the ſoul
To heav'nly contemplations and tranſport
To thoughts beyond itſelf; thence to look down
Upon this lower world and all it's cares,
It's pains, it's perſecutions with contempt:
Sometimes envelop'd in myſterious ſchemes
And parables he couch'd the moral truth,
Which painted on the memory left it's tints
Indelible: But when with tongue inſpir'd
The fall of nations he foretold, and drew
The curtain of futurity aſide;
When in the pomp of numbers he deſcrib'd
Jeruſalem beleaguer'd with a hoſt

Of Gentile foes and trodden down to duſt,
Her matrons and her virgins whelm'd in blood,
Or dragg'd to violation, ſhame and bondage
By ruffian ſpoilers; when his ſoaring flight,
Spurning the world's wide compaſs, ſcal'd the ſkies,
And there amidſt the empyrean fields,
As in his proper region, ſhook the ſpheres
Of ſun, moon, ſtars, as with a maſter's hand,
And ſhew'd them falling in prophetic awe
Of his own glorious coming in a cloud
With pow'r and ſtate ſupernal, then our hearts
With ſympathetic raptures burnt within us,
And we vain mortals ſaw, or thought we ſaw,
Our own vile bodies glorified to ſhare
In his triumphant entry, and ourſelves
To dignities and thrones and ſtarry ſpheres
Exalted, loftieſt in the realms of light.
But now theſe bright illuſions are no more;
Vaniſh'd theſe glitt'ring ſcenes, my claims on heav'n
All cancell'd, and my hopes a bankrupt's dream,
Mocking the haunted fancy with a pile
Of viſionary wealth. Behold me ſham'd,
Baniſh'd his board, detected, and my thoughts
Turn'd outward to provoke my brethren's ſcorn,
And blazon forth his preſcience: Let that paſs!

Traitor pronounc'd, a traitor I will be;
That prophecy at leaſt ſhall be fulfill'd.
Though maſter of my will I could refute
And daſh his bold prediction, yet my heart
Ponders revenge more ſuited to it's wrongs,
Greater than ſuch ſlight triumph can beſtow,
And not leſs terrible than death itſelf.
This night, the laſt that he ſhall walk at large,
This night ſhall be his triumph or his fall.
If theſe grave elders, who conſpire his death,
Theſe reverend prieſts revolt not from the deed,
That caſts on them, their function and their tribe
The peril of his blood, why ſhould my heart
Shrink from it's purpoſe? What have I to fear
In act ſubordinate, in cauſe ſupreme,
Traitor prejudg'd, of uncommitted crimes
Arraign'd, and thrown upon the world condemn'd?
More he had ſaid, but, like a ſerpent coil'd,
With ſudden ſtart he ſhrunk into himſelf,
And liſt'ning held his breath to catch the ſound
Of ſteps, that echoing o'er the flinty ſoil
Beſpoke a company in near approach:
With theſe the Maſter's well-known voice he heard;
Whereat, like murd'rous Cain when call'd of God,
The cow'ring conſcious outcaſt ſlunk aſide,

And wrapp'd his ruſſet cloak about his head,
Then darkling ſtood; the holy troop meanwhile
Forded the ſhallow brook and held their way
Strait to the Olive Mount, their wonted haunt.
Forth ſprung the lurking caitiff from his watch:
The greedy Mammon ruſh'd upon his heart,
Glorying that now he held them in his net,
Darkneſs conſpiring with occaſions apt
Of hour and place to make his vengeance ſure.
Remorſe was dead within him, every ſenſe
Of virtue loſt, yet in his coward breaſt
Such languor, dread and cold repugnance dwelt,
Scarce could the breath of hell's worſt fiend ſuffice
To blow it into flame: Now ſudden rage
Impell'd him onward, now with palſied fear
Struck back, he reel'd and ſhook in ev'ry joint.
This SATAN ſaw, and evermore at hand
To drive the wav'ring ſinner to his doom,
Breath'd all his ſpi'rit upon him; direr blaſt
Cocytus never vented, the full tide
Of aconite engender'd with his blood,
His brain, ſet ev'ry fev'riſh nerve in play,
And ſcrew'd his heated fancy to the pitch
Of daring and defiance; yet the wretch,
Not leſs a traitor to himſelf than CHRIST,

Or e'er the acting of the dreadful deed
Thus ſtrove by ſophiſtry to gloſs it o'er.
Why do I doubt? What horrors ſhake my mind?
Why ſhould not my affronted honor ſtir
Me to betray, as their inſulted law
Provokes our elders to deſtroy their foe?
For Moſes they, I for myſelf oppoſe;
And where's the wrong, if he, who knows my heart
And all it's meditations, will not deign
To turn it from it's purpoſe, and divert
The danger he foreknows; nay rather helps
To lure the embryo treaſon into birth?
Either his own free will makes death it's choice,
And ſo becomes accomplice in the deed,
Or elſe, foredoom'd to die, he knows his hour,
And thus, not acting of ourſelves but rul'd
By ſtrong neceſſity, we ſtand abſolv'd,
Mere guiltleſs tools and inſtruments of fate.
What then? Why let the Scriptures be fulfill'd,
Let prophecies, which are the voice of God,
Sound out his knell; we fight not againſt Heav'n.
Let CHRIST, if glory waits him in the grave,
Deſcend into the duſt and ſeek it there:
If his ſoul covets to make league with death,
And dwell in conſort with corruption's worm,

What time more apt for death than this dark hour,
Image of death itſelf? And who ſo fit
As God's high-prieſt, the temple's miniſter,
To put life's intervening veil aſide,
And uſher him to glory? I meanwhile,
His humble harbinger, will go before
T' announce his coming, and make clear the road
That leads to death, the goal of his ambition.
Yet how if all this tame indifference
Be but a feint to draw the world about him,
And then amaze them with ſome grand diſplay
Of wonder-working power? And who can tell
How far his hand miraculous may ſtretch,
Who from the tomb pluck'd forth the feſt'ring corpſe
Of ſhrowded Lazarus, three days in earth,
And bade him live again? Stupendous act!
This we beheld and hail'd him Lord of Life;
But ſtill the unconverted Jews ſtood off,
And deem'd us witneſſes of ſlight account,
Weak cred'lous men, firſt dup'd and thence become
Aſſociates in impoſture. What remains
But inſtantly to put my thoughts in act,
And yield him up to thoſe, who in th' attempt
Succeeding vindicate their diſbelief,
Failing abide the ſhame of their defeat?

In this or that opinion there muſt be
A dangerous error; to perſiſt were fatal:
This night diſpells all doubt: If he be CHRIST,
He lives confeſt and triumphs over death;
If man, he falls unpitied and abjur'd.
  Thus for foul deeds pretending fair excuſe,
The caitiff wretch on trait'rous errand bent,
Back through the city gates purſu'd his way,
And to his nightly aſſignation hied
  Perch'd on the ſummit of the ſacred Mount,
Should'ring God's temple, a proud palace ſtood:
There dwelt the ſovereign pontiff, and this night
Held ſolemn convocation and conſult,
Not for God's glory, other cares had they,
Cares nearer to their ſelfiſh hearts, concerns
Heav'n had no part in, impious dire cabals
How to prevent the day-ſpring from on high,
Now by CHRIST's revelation and his acts
Miraculous juſt dawning on the world,
Aforetime wrapt in darkneſs black as death,
Beſt veil for their hypocriſy and craft.
In their great hall of council, there in ranks,
Precedencies and dignities diſpos'd,
Doctors and long-rob'd phariſees and ſcribes
And bearded elders met; ſenate, to whom

For machinations, plots and ſecret wiles
Rome's purple conclave ſtoops. High over all
On throne pontifical in robes of ſtate,
With ſacred ephod girt of various hues,
And breaſt-plate glitt'ring bright with myſtic gems,
Mitre-crown'd CAIAPHAS, the temple's chief,
Exalted ſate: The ſanhedrim was full.
All came, whom luſt of power, or bigot zeal,
Or enmity to CHRIST rous'd to the call;
Mouth-worſhippers of God, agents of hell
In heart, and hypocrites abhorr'd of CHRIST,
To public ſcorn held up and pictur'd out
As rebel huſbandmen, who baſely ſlew
Their Lord's commiſſion'd Son. Scarce was there one,
Whoſe galled conſcience had not felt the ſting
Of ſome keen truth extorted from the lips
Of the elſe-humble JESUS, meek to all
But the proud Phariſee or cavi'lling Scribe,
To knaves, who thought by cunning to outwit
Wiſdom itſelf, and ſnare him in his talk;
To hypocrites, who faſted oft with ſad
And woe-worn faces to be ſeen of men,
Or ſuch as made long pray'rs for a diſplay
Of righteouſneſs, and vaunted their good deeds,
Mocking their conſcience and inſulting Heav'n:

To theſe in all the majeſty of truth
Frowning he ſpake, nor ſpar'd he for rebuke
Severe, indignant; many a time and oft
To their whole ſect he had denounced woe,
Woe trebled on their heads: What wonder then,
If thus combin'd by intereſt to oppoſe
His ſpreading glories, their envenom'd hearts
Rankled with envy, hatred and revenge?
Nor were there wanting to their great divan
Thoſe, who can work unſeen within the heart,
Dark miniſters, who know to touch the ſprings
And cords, whoſe movements can convulſe the ſoul
With furious paſſions, burſting from their mine,
Like ſulph'rous fires that tear the quaking earth:
SATAN himſelf was there, for at this hour
He and his hoſt had furlough upon earth,
Dæmons of blood, ambition, envy, ſtrife
Rang'd the vex'd world at large: Loud were their tongues,
And fiery hot their zeal againſt the Lord,
Whoſe miracles, reſounding through the land,
Rung in their ears the downfall of their pow'r,
Ill-omen'd knell.—Brethren! 'tis time to rouſe,
Cried CAIAPHAS, and ſtarted from his throne
Furious as Korah, when at his tent door
With his rebellious company he ſtood,

And waving high his cenſer call'd aloud
To mutiny 'gainſt Moſes: So now call'd
With voice as loud, and deeper plung'd in crime
Than theſe who ſunk outright, this ſecond prieſt,
This worſe revolter againſt God himſelf
In his own Son reflected; from his ſtate,
High o'er their heads exalted, he look'd down
On all beneath; then with uplifted eyes
And hands extended, as in act to rend
His robes pontifical—Yes, ſacred ſeers,
Again he cried, yes, venerable prieſts,
Elders, and reverend ſages of our law,
'Tis more than time to call your vengeance up;
Awake! ye ſleep too long: For me, your ſlave,
Servant of ſervants, me, by how much more
In place exalted ſo much more in heart
Abas'd, as meritleſs of ſuch high ſtate,
I were content to caſt theſe robes aſide,
Pluck off this beard, and on this mitred head,
Unworthy of ſuch honors, ſcatter duſt
And aſhes, might ſuch penitence avert
The ſhame, that for my ſins is falling on you,
And quell the mad'ning faction now afloat,
Since this bold Bethlemite hath ſtarted up
To mock the church of God. Shall it be ſaid,

That for my puniſhment theſe evils light
On you the righteous? that in my day roſe
This innovator to conſpire your fall,
To broach new doctrines and unhinge the faith
Of the ſtill wavering multitude? If I,
If I am in the crime, if in your thoughts
My negligence hath foſter'd this revolt,
Make me your ſacrifice, thruſt me from hence,
For this high place unfit; ſet up your croſs,
And there exalt me: But if I am clear,
And this your looks encourage me to hope,
If CHRIST not CAIAPHAS deſerves the death,
Why do ye pauſe? What terror holds you back?
Time-honor'd rabbi, elders, ſages, guides
And maſters of our Iſrael! ye, by whom
Our ſynagogues are taught, of God's own law
Interpreters ordain'd, which of your grave
And reverend council will at once unfold
To my yet faithleſs ears the mighty ſpell
By which this JESUS works? Who will expound
This prodigy, that ſets the crowd agape,
This more than man, of whom the people bruit
Theſe more than human doings? You are dumb;
None offers a reply; for none will ſay
This wiſdom and theſe mighty works accord

With

With one ſo mean of birth, with Joſeph's ſon,
A baſe mechanic: Fitter taſk for him
To uſe his father craft, and humbly ply
The workman's tools, than in the temple ſit
Diſputing with our doctors; or withdrawn,
As late the Baptiſt, to ſome deſart mount,
There ſit in ſullen dignity enthron'd,
And from his rocky theatre declaim
To liſt'ning thouſands. Here be ſome have heard
His doctrines, many have endur'd his taunts,
And though in wiſe and well-pois'd minds like your's
Such meteors breed no terror, yet they draw
The gazing vulgar, and ſo rank a taint
Runs through th' infected fold, that much I doubt
If half the flock of Iſrael be not touch'd;
So diligent is he to ſpread the plague,
So careleſs we to ſtem it. If his word
Be ſuffer'd thus to overturn our law,
The monument of ages, then alas!
We've ſeen the laſt of theſe ſolemnities:
Before this night returns there'll not be found
Or lamb to ſacrifice, or prieſt to ſlay,
Or temple to receive our Paſchal rites;
Rome, whoſe ambition graſps the conquer'd world,

Shall

Shall plant her eagles on our holy mount,
And Jupiter uſurp JEHOVAH's ſhrine.
He paus'd, yet ſtood as one in act to ſpeak,
Struggling for words, which furious paſſion choak'd
And ſtifled on his tongue; a ſtormy cloud
Hung on his brow, his viſage ghaſtly pale,
Mad'ning with rage he ſtampt and ſhook his robe:
As when the Delphic propheteſs, convuls'd
And foaming on her tripod, ſets aghaſt
The ſcar'd enthuſiaſts, who believe her fill'd
And fighting with the God oracular;
So through the hall of council ſilence reign'd,
Whilſt expectation turn'd all eyes and ears
On their rapt prophet; till the word being giv'n,
That one of CHRIST's diſciples ſtood without
And inſtant audience crav'd, that awful name
Their ſpell-bound faculties at once ſet free;
Inſtant loud murmurs fill'd the vaulted roof,
Like the deep roar of ſubterranean tides,
Whoſe eddies undermine the cavern'd ſhores
Of ſea-girt Mona or Bermuda's iſle:
This paſt, the ſenate's chief reſum'd his throne;
Whence from his ſtate inclining he gave ſign
For ſilence and commanded to admit

Their unexpected ſuitor; at the word
Wide flew the doors apart, and there behold
With cloak to' the knee tuck'd up and ſtaff in hand
ISCARIOT, caitiff viler than the worſt
That e'er wore pilgrim's ſanctimonious garb
In after-times, when fierce cruſading zeal
Sent forth it's wand'ring eremites to put
The murd'rous ſword in meek Religion's hand,
The croſs, on which our patient Lord expir'd,
Their badge of victory, and ſignal made
For their deſtroying armies, lur'd to war
With pardons earnt in fields of carnage, fought
For God's pretended glory', as if, dire hope!
Rivers of blood could waft their ſouls to heav'n.
Founder of theſe, and prototype of all,
Who dy'd the croſs with blood, ISCARIOT ſtood
Full of the fiend, and caſt around on all
His haggard eyes, that augur'd vengeful ire
And fraud deep brooding in his treach'rous heart:
When after pauſe now ſummon'd to expound
His purpoſe, whether by his Maſter ſent,
Or ſelf-impell'd, thus MAMMON's convert ſpake.
  Fathers of Iſrael, patrons of our law,
And chiefly thou, great prieſt, vicar of God,
And faithful ſhepherd of the remnant ſav'd

From

From Abraham's ſcatter'd flock! I muſe not, lords,
That you are caſt in wonder to behold
Me ſtanding in this place, me, to your cauſe
Unfriendly deem'd, and, which to all is known
Nor on my part denied, one of the Twelve,
And follower of JESUS. But, grave ſirs,
I do adjure you by your love to truth,
No longer wear this jealous eye upon me,
Than to your patient ears I ſhall unfold,
Why hither I am come, not as a thief
To ſteal into your councils, ſpy them out
And after blazon them, but in fair faith
And plain ſincerity with no double heart
To make confeſſion ſure, and give my life
A pledge into your hands. Stand not amaz'd,
As if it were a thing impoſſible
That CHRIST's diſciple ſhould not be his friend.
Mine hath been toilſome huſbandry, my lords,
And none but bitter fruits have I reap'd from it,
Fruits of repentance: Weary days and nights
I've miniſter'd to him without reward,
And weary miles full many travel'd o'er,
Fainting and pinch'd with hunger; then at night,
When the wild creatures of the earth find reſt
And covert in their holes, houſeleſs have watch'd

Amidſt

Amidſt the ſhock of elements, and brav'd
Storms, which the mail'd rhinoceros did not dare
Unſhelter'd to abide: Sometimes on ſea
Laſh'd by the ſurging waves I've toil'd for life,
Whilſt he ſate ſleeping, reckleſs of the gale:
Reſcu'd from theſe, for I of force confeſs
His pow'r is abſolute, and ſafe on ſhore,
My labors ceas'd not with the ſcene; new toils,
New taſks ſucceeded: Now to rocks and caves,
To ſandy wilds, or whereſoever elſe
The Spirit led and deſolation reign'd,
His wand'ring ſteps I follow'd, yes, his ſteps,
But at what diſtance from his heart he held me,
Bear witneſs, mem'ry! Others had his heart,
Peter and James and John, to them he breath'd
The ſecrets of his ſoul, on them he ſhower'd
His promiſes; of theſe he made no thrift,
Theſe he abounded in; to me he gave
What he had leaſt in ſtore, a barren purſe,
And bade me bear it; no hard taſk I own,
For it was light as beggary could make it,
But office moſt ignoble. Here perchance
Your wiſdom would demand of me a cauſe,
Why I endur'd theſe ſlights year after year,
And ſtill toil'd on in ſuch a thankleſs ſervice;

What faſcination and what ſpell, you'll aſk,
Doth this man work with, ſo to charm the mind
And lure it on through mortifying toils,
Sorrows and pains, and, worſe than theſe, contempts,
Yet hold it ſtill enchain'd ſlave to his will?
Moſt equal judges, I muſt here ſubmit
My weakneſs to your cenſure, and refer
My cauſe to mercy, or in ſelf-defence
Conjure you for a moment to deſcend
From your high ſtate, and to my humble place
And peaſant thoughts accord your own great minds:
My lords, I neither mean to varniſh o'er
My own too feeble nature, nor to ſmooth
The rough ſincerity of truth through fear
Or flattery of thoſe, 'fore whom I ſpeak:
If JESUS works by ſpells, I know them not;
Pray'rs but not incantations I have heard;
If theſe be charms, they are no charms for devils,
Yet ſuch he's charg'd withal: Neither by league
With Beelzebub, as ſome have gravely urg'd,
Nor art Samaritan, nor elſe by imp
Or genius, as the heathen loudly vouch
Of their fam'd Socrates, do I believe
His miracles are wrought: Alas, alas!
Which of hell's miniſters will be ſuborn'd

To work his own confuſion? No, they ſhriek,
They tremble, at his bidding they come forth
From men poſſeſt, they vaniſh to the winds,
They ſink into the pit from whence they ſprung.
I am a man, my lords, not over-prone
To raſh credulity, nor apt to veer
With ev'ry breath of doctrine, and I've heard
A voice, that ſways the elements, commands
The ſprings of health, making maim'd nature whole,
Nay, life itſelf return into the trunk
Which it had left, and give a ſecond pulſe
To the cold heart of death: This to have ſeen,
And not to ſtand in reverence of the pow'r
That wrought theſe miracles, were a degree
Of apathy above my nature's reach.
No more! cried CAIAPHAS, no more of this!
You much abuſe our patience with this talk.
Here is no place to ſound CHRIST's praiſes forth;
We are not met to recognize his pow'r
And back his daring claims, but to chaſtiſe
Impoſture, to aſſert our ſacred law,
And vindicate the majeſty of Heav'n.
You tell us you are wearied with the taſks
Of a hard Maſter; quit him then and earn
A better ſervice, earn a rich reward

By yielding him to juſtice. You well know
His haunts, his privacies, his darkling hours,
When without hazard of a public brawl
We may make lawful ſeizure for the ſtate
Of his attainted perſon: On this point,
So you will order your diſcourſe aright,
You may ſpeak freely; of his praiſe no more.

To him th' Apoſtate: If from my forc'd lips,
Unwilling witneſſes although they be,
Truth wrings this praiſe, the laſt which they will utter,
Suffer thus far in candor, and let paſs
Theſe words in juſtice to a Maſter's fame,
Whom I renounce and with an oath devote
To wrath, to puniſhment, to death itſelf,
If death you doom. But oh! moſt reverend lords,
It is not as a falſe and juggling cheat,
A dealer with familiars I preſent him
To your juſt judgment: Wretches vile as theſe
Would but diſgrace your wrath and my revenge.
But take him as a victim from my hands
Richer than hecatombs of vulgar blood,
A ſacrifice for God's high prieſt to make,
Whilſt all earth's ſceptered monarchs ſtood around
To gaze upon the work. Be not deceiv'd:
I know the jeopardy in which I ſtand,

Yet

Yet I will on; in me is no delay:
This night, this hour, this inſtant I am your's
To trace him to his haunts, to be your guide
And marſhal you to vengeance. But beware!
Let them be choſen men you ſend, approv'd
And conſtant, though the heav'ns ſhall rain down fire,
And the earth rock beneath them: He, who call'd
The dead anatomy to life, can well
Make corpſes of the living.—Here the voice
Of one, who neareſt to the throne had place,
Cut ſhort the traitor's ſpeech: Of high renown
Was he now riſing, NICODEMUS, known
To after-ages as the nightly gueſt
Of JESUS, and his converſe with our Lord
In holy writ recorded: Grave he was,
A Phariſee and ruler of the Jews,
Yet not of ſoul vindictive like the reſt,
Nor aſpect arrogant; when thus he ſpake.
I call the time miſpent, that is beſtow'd
On loud-tongu'd orators, whoſe art it is
To launch their hearers upon paſſion's tide,
And drive them on by guſts of windy words
A giddy deſperate courſe to rocks and ſhoals,
Which ſteer'd by ſage experience they had ſhunn'd.
Such ſhipwreck of our wiſdom we might make,

Should

Should we our better ſenſes now permit
To take improv'ident counſel of our ears,
By this high-ton'd declaimer thus aſſail'd.
I pray you, therefore, carry back your thoughts
To times foregone, when prophets have aroſe
And boaſted mighty works, which, being done
Of man's device and cunning, came to nought:
So will it be with JESUS, if his ſpirit
Be not of God; time will o'ertake deceit,
If time be let to run; but cut it ſhort
By death's raſh ſtroke, you cover him with glory,
And from his aſhes raiſe a mightier name,
Than living he had reach'd with all the aids
Of artifice to back him. Give me, Heav'n!
That tolerating policy, which ſhews
No bitterneſs in ſpeculative points:
Diſdaining from my heart what this man ſays,
A traitor ſays, who comes to ſell his Maſter,
My ſentence never ſhall affect the life
Of this or any other man accus'd
On vague preſumptions, nor will I ſay, Die!
Till I have that in proof, which merits death:
For if this JESUS vaunts himſelf to be
What he is not, God will confute his pride;
But if with pow'r divine he acts and ſpeaks,

Commiſſion'd

Commiſſion'd to ſome awful unſeen end,
Shall man contend with God? Vain ſtrife! ſhall we
Fall off from our great origin, the faith
Of our bleſt father Abraham? Shall we,
Sore ſmitten for our treſpaſſes, cut ſhort
And waſted to a remnant, we, on whom
The guiltleſs blood of all the prophets reſts,
Send this man up to heav'n to cry againſt us,
And to a burthen heavier than enough
Add more and weightier guilt than all the reſt?
Heav'n's grace forefend! You have my conſcience, lords;
I leave it to your thoughts: I ſtand abſolv'd.
He ſaid, and conſcious that his words were loſt
Upon obdurate hearts, departed thence,
So warn'd of God, and from the gulph eſcap'd
Of that night's dire perdition, wherein all
Save him alone were loſt. So in the wreck
Of ſome great admiral, full fraught for war,
When his tall veſſel ſplits, and the bold crew
Plunge quick into th' abyſs, Heav'n ſometimes deigns
By wond'rous providence to ſnatch one life
From the devouring waves, and waft him home
A ſolitary relick, there to tell
God's mercies and his ſad companions' fate.

Him thus departing the proud pontiff ey'd
With look malign, and to theſe taunts gave vent.
Weak is that cauſe, whoſe advocate flies from it:
I pauſe to ſee if any here will follow.
None moves, none ſpeaks, none ſeconds his appeal:
'Tis well! One only convert to our foe,
One patron of his cauſe this ſenate held,
And holds no longer: Vaniſh'd, flown, eſcap'd!
One heart, one mind, one voice now rules the whole.
For me, I nor opinion ſhift nor place,
Faithful I ſhrink from neither. You have heard
What this wiſe elder counſels; he hath left
His conſcience as a legacy behind him:
Let him, who loves the giver, take the gift;
I, for ſuch part as to my ſhare may fall,
Scorn to engraft that ſcyon on my heart,
Which, if admitted, might impart the ſeeds
Of treaſon and apoſtacy like his.
Till cold and hot agree, till ſelfiſh fear
And temporiſing maxims coaleſce
With patriot zeal for Iſrael and firm faith
In God's reveal'd decrees, his thoughts and mine
Will never mix, and the attempt to join
Their jarring elements could only ſerve

To

To make this breaſt a field of mental war.
Mark, brethren, mark how this man contravenes
Your antient juſt retaliating law.
Moſes ſaid—Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth!
So is revenge a virtue: By this rule
JESUS muſt die; for who puts out the law,
Puts out the light of Iſrael, ſtabs the life,
And life for life is juſtice upon record.
This ordinance our abſent elder ſpurns;
He holds at nought our antient equity,
And ſets new doctrines forth; tells us forſooth,
That we muſt wait the time, wait till the light
Of Iſrael be extinct, and leave redreſs
For thoſe, who without eyes can ſpy it out:
Such councils would make cowards of us all,
Rebels to God, deſerters from the faith,
Traitors to Iſrael. Can I wear theſe robes,
And wear a heart within ſo vile, ſo baſe?
Tear them away, uncover me to ſhame,
Make me the ſcorn of men, if, thus array'd
And trickt in outſide honors, I am found
Falſe to that King, whoſe ſtandard I ſupport.
No, venerable ſages, if your rule
Were ſhort to teach us what our duty is,
The very heathen would inform us of it:

The Roman ſoldier, who deſerts his poſt,
Or ſleeping ſuffers a ſurprize, ſhall die;
But we, with God's own armies in our charge,
We, whoſe commander is the Lord of Hoſts,
Should we be found thus criminal, what death,
What doom, more terrible than death itſelf,
Can recompenſe ſuch treaſon? Forth then, lords!
Draw out an armed band and ſend them forth.
Behold a ready leader! Time yet ſerves;
This night no ſtir, no ſtragglers in our ſtreets
To ſhake the city's peace: JESUS ſecur'd
And hither brought, a largeſs I decree
To all concern'd; to JUDAS a reward
Befitting us to give, him to receive.
No more; loud acclamations ſhook the hall:
Th' aſſembly roſe, the traitor bow'd aſſent,
A band of ruffians arm'd with ſwords and ſtaves
Forth iſſued with ISCARIOT at their head,
And to the Olive Mountain bent their courſe.
Oh, hour accurſt! Oh, all ye ſtars of heav'n!
And thou pale waining moon, etherial lights,
Firſt-born of Nature, look not, ye chaſte fires,
Upon this monſter-breeding earth, but quench
Your conſcious lamps and whelm this murd'rous crew
In darkneſs black as their own damning plot.

And thou, conductor of this Stygian band,
Vile hypocrite, what fiend inſpir'd the thought
To hail thy Maſter with the kiſs of peace,
And ſo betray him? Wretch, the time will come,
When rack'd with horror, and to all hope loſt,
Thine agonizing ſoul ſhall rue this deed,
Curſe its birth-hour, and whilſt thy Maſter ſoars
To heav'n, triumphant over death and ſin,
Thou ſhalt ſink howling to the depths of hell.

Now break your ſynod up, ye envious prieſts,
Elders and ſcribes! prepare your harden'd hearts
To judge the Lord of Life, convene your ſpies
To forge falſe witneſs, and make ſmooth the way
To man's redemption by the blood of CHRIST,
The very Paſchal Lamb, whom by the type
Of this night's ſacrifice ye ſhadow'd forth,
Blind unbelieving prophets as ye are.
Fit hour ye choſe, ye murd'rers, to embrue
Your curſed hands in that pure Victim's blood,
Peace-offering for the ſins of loſt mankind.
Hence to your homes! there meditate new plots;
The fiends ſhall be your helpers, to your thoughts
Preſent, though not to fight, they ſwarm around,
Now here, now there, now hovering over head,
Where, as your enmity to CHRIST breaks forth,

And your blaſpheming voices fill the roof,
Like ſteaming vapors from ſulphureous lakes,
Joyous they catch the welcome ſounds, and fan
With clapping wings the peſtilential air,
Applauding as they ſoar. Now clear the hall;
Yield up your ſeats, ye ſubſtituted fiends;
Hence, minor dæmons! give your maſters place!
And hark! the King of Terrors ſpeaks the word,
He calls his ſhadowy princes, they ſtart forth,
Expand themſelves to fight and throng the hall,
A ſynod of infernals: Forms more dire
Imagination ſhapes not, when the wretch,
Whom conſcience haunts, in the dead hour of night,
Whilſt all is dark and ſilent round his bed,
Sees hideous phantoms in his fev'riſh dream,
That ſtare him into madneſs with fix'd eyes
And threat'ning faces floating in his brain.
The ghoſtly monarch mounts the vacant throne;
Gives ſign for order, the ſuperiors ſit,
Each as his ſtellar attribute gives rank
And place peculiar, the untitled ſtand
Circling their LUCIFER, their fallen ſun:
He of his ſtate more jealous, as in heart
Conſcious of faded glory, in the midſt
Now riſing, after many a hard eſſay

To wreathe his war-worn face into a ſmile,
Semblance at leaſt of joy, at length with voice
Screw'd to the pitch of triumph vaunting cries.
Pow'rs and Dominions, Lords by victory's right
Of earth and man, now from his Maker won
By overthrow of Heav'n's laſt champion giv'n
In God's own city, battle fairly gain'd
On hoſtile ground, his Sion's ſacred mount,
Warriors, your king applauds you: Thanks, brave friends;
Now ſhall your temples with loud pæans ring,
Your vindicated altars and your groves
Exhale rich clouds of incenſe, ſteaming forth
From od'rous gums; your ſtatues gaily crown'd
With garlands, every trophy, that the art
Of painting or of ſculpture can beſtow,
Shall be hung round to decorate your ſhrines;
Your oracles henceforth ſhall find a voice,
Which future CHRISTS ſhall never put to ſilence,
And nations from your lips ſhall aſk their fate:
This day to all poſterity ſhall be
Sacred to games, proceſſions, triumphs, feaſts,
And laurel-crowned bards ſhall hymn your praiſe.
But ſure no ſpirit of etherial mould,
For ſuch of right ye are, will ſo forget
His native dignity as to repine,

Or

Or gloat with envy, if I now demand
Your tribute of eſpecial praiſe to him,
Whom your joint ſuffrages deputed firſt
To this important embaſſy; a ſpirit
Our ſubterranean empire cannot mate
For high authority and potent ſway
O'er man's ſubjected heart: MAMMON, ſtand forth!
Stand forth, thou proſp'rous, rich, perſuaſive pow'r,
Worſhipp'd of all, great idol of the world;
May fortune on thy patient labors ſmile,
Thou perſevering deity! Purſue
Thy darling metal through earth's central veins,
Ranſack her womb for mines, ſend forth thy ſlaves
To undiſcover'd realms and bid them ſap
Potoſi's glittering mountains for their ore;
Pull down her golden temples, ſtrip her kings,
Rack them with tortures, wring their ſecrets out
By ſlow-conſuming fires, lay Nature waſte,
Let nothing mortal breathe upon the ſoil
That covers gold: All hell applauds thy zeal,
And all hell's engines ſhall aſſiſt thy ſearch.
He ſaid, and lo! from either ſide the throne
Upon the ſignal a ſeraphic choir
In equal bands came forth; the minſtrels ſtrike
Their golden harps; ſwift o'er the ſounding ſtrings

Their flying fingers ſweep, whilſt to the ſtrain
Melodious voices, though to heav'nly airs
Attun'd no longer, ſtill in ſweet accord
Echo the feſtive ſong, now full combin'd
Pouring the choral torrent on the ear,
In parts reſponſive now warbling by turns
Their ſprightly quick diviſions, ſwelling now
Through all the compaſs of their tuneful throats
Their varying cadences, as fancy prompts.
Whereat the Stygian herd, like them of old
Lull'd by the Theban minſtrel, ſtood at gaze
Mute and appeas'd, for muſic hath a voice,
Which ev'n the devils obey, and for a while
Sweet ſounds ſhall lay their turbid hearts aſleep,
Charm'd into ſweet oblivion and repoſe.
The praiſe of MAMMON the rapt ſeraphs ſung
And Gold's almighty pow'r; free flow'd the verſe;
No need to call the Muſe, for all were there,
Apollo and the Heliconian Maids,
And all that pagan poet e'er invok'd
Were preſent to the ſong. Above the flight
Of bold Alcæus, Tiſias bard divine,
Or Pindar's ſtrain Olympic, high it ſoar'd
In dithyrambic majeſty ſublime.
At the right hand of hell's terrific Lord

MAMMON

MAMMON exalted ſate, and as the choir
Chanted their hymn, his ſwelling boſom throbb'd
In concert with the ſtrain; pride fluſh'd his cheek
Furrow'd with care and toil, his eyes, now rais'd
From earth, their proper center, ſparkling gleam'd
Malicious triumph, whilſt ovations loud
And thund'ring plaudits ſhook the trembling roof.
The ſong was clos'd, and, order now reſum'd,
MAMMON ſtood forth to ſpeak; when ere the words
From his ſlow lips found way, the infernal King,
With eager action ſtarting from his throne,
Gave ſign for ſilence and thus interpos'd.
Pauſe, worthy ſpi'rit, awhile! my mind forebodes
Cares more immediate, for amid the throng
I ſpy our faithful CHEMOS; well I know
'Tis not on ſlight occaſion he hath left
The poſt aſſign'd him; and behold! his looks
Augur important tidings. Fall back, friends,
And give our gallant centinel acceſs.
Obedient to the word the opening files
Fell back and let him paſs; he to the throne
Low rev'rence made, and thus his chief addreſs'd.
Imperial Lord of this ſeraphic hoſt,
As I kept ſtation on the faithleſs Mount,
Where once my altar blaz'd, revolted now

From

From it's allegiance and with olive crown'd
In token of God's peace, I thence deſcried
By glimpſe of the pale moon a vagrant train,
With JESUS at their head, fording the brook,
As thither bound: I couch'd upon the watch,
So bidd'n, and to their talk gave heedful ear.
A melancholy theme the Maſter choſe:
Sadly he warns them of his own death's hour
Now near impending, and how all ſhall fly,
Like ſcatter'd ſheep, and their lone Shepherd leave
Forlorn, abandon'd: This the fiery zeal
Of PETER, to our chief well known, diſclaims,
Who boldly vouches, though all elſe ſhould ſwerve,
His own unſhaken conſtancy; when CHRIST,
Severe though not with railing, him reproves,
And ſolemnly denounces triple breach
Of this vain boaſt, and inſtant, for this night,
Or e'er the cock's ſhrill trumpet twice ſhall ſound,
So CHRIST predicts, he ſhall be thrice denied
Of this ſelf-vaunting man: All this I heard,
And held it for my duty to report;
What more enſu'd imperfectly I learn;
For now the Maſter taketh three apart,
And much diſturb'd in ſoul and ſore amaz'd
Wills them ſtand off and watch, whilſt he retires

And vents his grief in pray'r: I ſaw him fall
Proſtrate to earth, and vent ſuch heart-felt groans,
That were I other than I am, leſs wrong'd,
Leſs hoſtile to the tyranny of Heaven,
Whence I am exil'd, I had then let fall
Weak pity's tear and been my nature's fool.
But, lords, I cannot ſo forget your cauſe,
Or my own wrongs, nor would I wear a heart
Made of ſuch melting ſtuff. With noiſeleſs tread
The kneeling Suppliant I approach'd, and mark'd
His agony of ſoul, whilſt from his brow
I ſaw large drops and gouttes of bloody ſweat
Incarnardine the duſt, on which they fell.
Bear witneſs, my revenge, 'twas there, ev'n there,
The very ſpot, on which he knelt and pray'd,
Where now his blood, wrung out by agony
As in atonement, dropt, on which my ſhrine,
Rear'd by the wives of the uxorious king,
Deck'd out with blazing tapers proudly ſhone,
And front to front of God's own temple ſtood,
Till Aſa's parricidal hand pluck'd up
Maacha's groves and burnt my ſhrine to duſt.
Now hear the ſequel: As I ſtood at gaze,
Noting his pray'r, one of the heav'nly band
And of the higheſt, GABRIEL, with his ſpear

Couch'd as for combat, ſtarted forth to view,
And frowning bade me take my flight with ſpeed,
Nor trouble that juſt perſon: Valiant peers!
I am not one to back at his proud bidding,
Nor ever did I turn my face to flight
Save in our army's univerſal rout,
When all from heav'n fell headlong to the gulph:
Such weapon as I had, this trenchant ſword
Of adamantine proof, forthwith I drew;
But ere my arm could wield it, ſwift as thought
I felt his ſpear's ſharp point with forceful thruſt
Deep plung'd into my ſide: Staggering, amaz'd,
I gave back ſo compell'd; he ſtill advanc'd
Arm'd for a ſecond onſet, when my ſtrength
Foil'd, though immortal, and my ſight grown dim,
My wound the whilſt ſore rankling, I took wing
And hither came on painful pinions borne,
Your faithful ſervant, whether to attempt
Freſh battle, or my preſent loſs repair.
This ſaid, he put his azure tunic by,
And bar'd his wounded ſide, where GABRIEL's ſpear
Had lodg'd it's maſſy fluke, a ghaſtly chaſm
Trench'd by the force of arch-angelic arm,
And to aught elſe than deathleſs ſpirit death.

Fir'd at the ſight with eyes that ſparkling blaz'd
SATAN uproſe, and thus infuriate ſpake.
GABRIEL in arms! Hah! warriors, we are brav'd:
CHRIST hath his guard about him and defies us.
If this immortal ſpirit could not ſtand,
What ſhall ISCARIOT do? Myſelf will forth;
We ſhall then ſee who wields the ſtronger lance,
SATAN or GABRIEL: In the fields of heaven,
In the mid-air, on earth, in deepeſt hell
He knows my might ſuperior, and ſhall rue
His daſtardly aſſault. Why not with me,
The ſender rather than the ſent, this ſtrife?
So might he boaſt the conteſt, though ſubdued.
The ſcars by this ſharp ſword in battle dealt
Are the beſt honors GABRIEL hath to vaunt;
The brighteſt laurels on his brow are thoſe
I planted when in equal fight I deign'd
To meaſure ſpears with ſuch inferior foe.
Doth GABRIEL think God's favour can reverſe
Immutable pre-eminence, and raiſe
His menial ſphere to that, in which I ſhone
Son of the morning? Doth he vainly hope
Exil'd from heav'n we left our courage there,
Or loſt it in our fall, or that hell's fires

Have

Have parch'd and wither'd our ſhrunk ſinews up?
Deluſive hope! the warrior's nerve is ſtrung
By exerciſe, by pain, by glorious toil:
The torrid clime of hell, it's burning rock,
It's gulph of liquid flames, in which we roll'd,
Have calcin'd our ſtrong hearts, breath'd their own fires
Into our veins, and forg'd thoſe nerves to ſteel,
Which heav'n's calm æther, her voluptuous ſkies
And frequent adorations well nigh ſmooth'd
To the ſoft flexibility of ſlaves,
Till bold rebellion ſhook it's fetters off,
And with their clangor rais'd ſo brave a ſtorm,
That God's eternal throne rock'd to it's baſe.
Now break we up this council: Each diſperſe
Or to his poſt, his pleaſure or purſuit;
Sufficeth for this taſk my ſingle arm:
CHEMOS ſhall be reveng'd; the public zeal
Of MAMMON ſtill ſhall be our theme of praiſe;
Nor ſhall ISCARIOT's nightly plot be foil'd
By intervening angels, nor theſe prieſts,
Whoſe ſeats we fill and whoſe allies we are,
Fail of their victim, or find us remiſs
To ſecond them in this our common league,
And joint emprize againſt the pow'rs of Heav'n.

'Twas

'Twas ſaid, the princes of th' aſſembly roſe
In reverence to his will; the legion round
Smote on their ſhields the ſignal of aſſent.
Tow'ring he ſtood, the Majeſty of Hell,
Dark o'er his brows thick clouds of vengeance roll'd,
Thunder was in his voice, his eye ſhot fire,
And loud he call'd for buckler and for ſpear;
Theſe bold AZAZEL bore, enormous weight,
For Atlantean ſpirit proper charge:
With eager graſp he ſeiz'd the towering maſt,
And ſhook it like a twig; then with a frown,
That aw'd the ſtouteſt heart, gave ſign for all
Strait to diſperſe, and vaniſh'd from their ſight.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

A general review of Chriſt's agony in the garden: His diſciples, who are ordered to watch, fall aſleep; Chriſt prays apart; he wakens them, and warns them to watch leſt they enter into temptation. Satan arrives, and takes poſt near the ſpot where Chriſt is praying in his agony: He is diſcovered by Gabriel, the ſupporting angel; their interview deſcribed: Chriſt approaches, and reproving Satan, by the word of power caſts him to the ground diſabled and in torments. Judas now advances with an armed company; betrays his Maſter with a kiſs; Chriſt is ſeized and carried away to the palace of the high prieſt. Satan, unable to riſe, laments over his diſconſolate condition: He is diſcovered by Mammon, who conſoles him and aſſiſts in raiſing him from the ground: Satan teſtifies to the power and divinity of Chriſt, feels a preſentiment of his impending doom, and having delivered his laſt injunctions to Mammon, is lifted from the earth by a ſtormy guſt and carried through the air out of ſight of that evil ſpirit, who terrified by the fate of his chief turns to flight and eſcapes.

CALVARY.

BOOK IV.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

O MOUNT of Agony! water'd with tears
From my Redeemer's eyes, and by his knees,
Preſſing thy turf, made ſacred as the ground,
Where ev'n the Choſen Shepherd might not ſtand
But with unſandal'd feet, Ah! where is now
That purifying Angel me to cleanſe
From this vile world, that ſo I may approach,
Though but in thought, with a right ſpi'rit renew'd,
Thy hallow'd ſolitude? Lo! where the Lord
Sorrowing retires apart: Where are the Three
Station'd to guard his ſacred privacy?
Stand they aloof, as their forefathers ſtood,
When from the midſt of darkneſs, cloud and fire,
JEHOVAH thunder'd out of Sinai's mount?
Ah, no! within that olive grove they lie

Stretch'd on the ground, a drowſy ſlumb'ring guard.
And could ye not, ye ſleepers, watch one hour
For ſuch a Maſter? Oh! what heart could taſte
Of reſt or peace, whilſt his was rack'd with pain?
Was it the ſighs his ſuffering virtue breath'd
Into the air of ſad Gethſemane,
That ſo entranc'd your ſenſes? Or was he,
The ſtrength'ning Angel, ſent from Heav'n to ſhield
The Savior's anguiſh from all human eyes,
And veil the myſtery of that awful hour?
Then was that angry cup, full mix'd and red
From God's right hand, preſented to his lips:
The bitter eſſence of origi'nal ſin,
With every life-deſtroying extract, drawn
From man's corruption ſince, were there infus'd,
Compounded and reſolved into that draught,
Mix'd by the hand of Death and drugg'd in hell.
The coward, ſhrinking under fortune's blows,
With deſperate lip hath oft-times drank and died;
'Tis refuge, 'tis deſertion from a poſt:
He dare defend no longer, 'tis the hope,
Falſe fruitleſs hope, of a perpetual ſleep,
When he hath bottom'd that Lethæan cup:
But our Redeemer's potion was not ſuch;
Horrors and heart-diſſolving woes and pangs,

That mock imagination's ſcope, and ſtretch
The heart's ſtrong cordage, till it burſts aſunder
And leaves the mind a wreck, theſe were the drugs,
That brew'd that cup of agony, which God
Now tender'd as the wrath-atoning draught
For a revolted world! Myſterious act!
The Father ſacrifice the Son belov'd!
The juſt to ſpare the unjuſt lay the rod
Upon the guiltleſs head! Shall all offend,
And One atone for all? One Victim bear
The accumulated load of puniſhment,
The maſs of vengeance, that amazing whole,
Which each particu'lar ſin had pil'd in ſtore,
And that devoted ſacrifice a Lamb
Pure, without ſpot or blemiſh? O my ſoul!
Beware, nor to that tabernacle preſs,
Where clouds and darkneſs canopy thy God.
Lo! where the Savior kneels; he looks around
For ſome to ſuccour, to ſupport, ſome friend,
Whoſe ſympathiſing eye might beam upon him,
And with a moment's glance of pity chear
His deſolated ſpirit. All around
Is vacant horror, ſolitary, dark;
The partners of his heart, the choſen few,
The friends, who ſhould have watch'd, are wrapt in ſleep,

Inſenſible, ſupine, oblivious ſleep;
Woes multiplied by woe, and that the worſt,
Ingratitude, the ſharpeſt fang that gnaws
Man's bleeding boſom. In this ſad extreme,
His ſoul revolting from the noiſome draught,
With eyes to Heav'n uplifted, and a ſigh,
Which ſhew'd that human weakneſs then o'erpower'd
His ſoul's diviner part—Abba! he cries,
Father, all things are poſſible to Thee,
Remove this cup!—Then bows his patient head
And qualifies the pray'r—Yet not my will,
But Thine be done!—No voice from Heav'n replies:
All Nature ſleeps in ſilence ſtill as death,
As if the planets in their ſpheres had paus'd
To watch the trembling balance, on whoſe point
The fortunes of this globe ſuſpended hung,
It's ruin or redemption, death or life.
'Twas then the ſtrength'ning Angel dealt the blow,
That put the hovering ſpy of hell to flight,
Seen of our Lord in ambuſh where he lay.
And now the Mourner riſes from the earth,
On which he knelt, and a few paces moves
Penſive and ſlow to find his ſtation'd friends:
He finds them not as friends upon the watch,
Not as God's faithful ſoldiers ſhould be found,

But at their length ſtretch'd out in lazy ſleep
With folded arms ſupine. Rous'd by his voice
They ſtare, they ſtart confounded and amaz'd.
Could ye not watch one hour? the Sufferer cries:
Watch, for the foe of man is near at hand;
Pray, leſt ye fall into the Tempter's ſnare:
The ſpi'rit is ready, but the fleſh is weak.
So warn'd, he leaves them with this mild rebuke:
A ſecond time he ſeeks the diſmal dell,
Again he prays remiſſion of his woe,
And deprecates the agonizing cup:
Meanwhile his drowſy centinels perceive
A languor, which their ſenſes muſt obey,
And down they ſink, their leaden eye-balls clos'd
As in a death-like trance. Again he comes,
Again he calls, a ſecond warning gives,
And ſo departs.——Now SATAN on the wing
Swift as a fiery meteor rides the air,
With ſhield and ſpear arm'd at all points for war:
Then down at once with huge Titanian bulk,
Plumb down he lights upon the ſolid ſoil,
Hard by th' angelic poſt: Earth felt the ſhock,
And trembling to her center inly groan'd.
Nor did his haughty courage deign to crouch,

Or lurk with lion watch, but firm of foot
Erect and confident in arms he ſtood,
As one, whoſe proweſs all advantage ſcorn'd
And mean ſurprize of an unguarded foe:
Such arts to weaker ſpirits he reſign'd;
He of his former ſelf felt no decay,
Or feeling ſcorn'd confeſſion, for his pride
Still deem'd that heav'n, though loſt, contain'd no peer
To mate with him in hardihood and proof,
Save only the Almighty; to ſuch heighth
Of arrogance had pow'r long time uſurp'd
Over the Gentile nations, and the ſight
Of God's own Son, now, as he falſely deem'd,
Vanquiſh'd and proſtrate, ſwell'd his impious heart.
Our bleſſed Lord meanwhile having preferr'd
For the laſt time his interceding prayer,
Summon'd his ſtrength, and conſcious that the hour
Was come, which finiſh'd or revok'd the taſk
Of man's redemption from the powers of hell,
Whoſe repreſentative hard by at hand
Stood eager to arreſt the forfeit prize,
Put forth his hand, and as he took the cup,
SATAN, who ſtood ſpectator of the deed,
Started aghaſt; cold tremor ſhook his joints,

His

His threat'ning ſpear now droop'd, and his broad ſhield,
So proudly borne aloft, weigh'd down his arm
Slack and unnerv'd; confuſion ſeiz'd his heart,
And his high courage quail'd. This GABRIEL ſaw,
Yet left he not his poſt till CHRIST had drain'd
The cup myſterious; to its loweſt dregs
He drank it; now convulſion ſhook the fiend,
Death ſhriek'd amain and through his hollow ribs
Drove his own ebon dart with deſp'rate rage.
Bitter the draught and hateful to the taſte,
But Immortality had crown'd the cup,
And Light and Life on phœnix wings ſprung forth
From the foul dregs in new-born glories bright.
GABRIEL, who knew that by this ſolemn act
Thus happily perform'd his charge expir'd,
Now turn'd away in ſearch of that fierce ſpi'rit,
Whom thro' the darkling covert he had ſeen,
Whilſt by the ſide of God's afflicted Son
Miniſt'ring he ſtood: Right well he knew the form
And towering port of hell's terrific King;
Nor had the dire confuſion and diſmay
Of that fell dæmon ſcap'd th' angelic glance.
Him now within a gloomy dell retir'd
To further diſtance, wrapt as it ſhould ſeem
In penſive thought, the Guardian Seraph ſpied.

In the ſame moment SATAN's ghaſtly eye
Glanc'd on his foe: bright in cærulean arms
Heav'n's champion ſhone, high o'er his creſted helm
The arch-angelic plume triformed wav'd,
Enſign of throned ſtate and high command.
The griſly monarch gnaſh'd his teeth with ſpite
To find himſelf encounter'd at ſuch odds;
His foe freſh blooming in immortal youth,
Vigorous, in heav'nly-temper'd armor brac'd;
Himſelf at this ill hour ſurpriz'd, his ſtrength
As by enchantment blaſted, and that voice,
Which in the ears of all hell's princes vouch'd
Such bold atchievements, ſhrunk from it's high pitch
To feeble murmurs and weak whining ſighs.
So when on Zama's plain the rival chiefs,
Rome's conſul and the Punic captain, met
To parley in mid-way 'twixt either camp,
The war-worn veteran, blighted and defac'd
By wint'ry marches over noiſome fens
And ſnows on mountains pil'd, with envious eye,
Sole relick of his toil, ſurvey'd the form
And blooming features of his youthful foe;
Then to his mind recalling glories paſt,
When his proud menace aw'd immortal Rome,
Sigh'd to reflect how far in the decline

From that bright morn his evening ſun had ſunk;
Then ey'd the youth again, and in his face,
Shadow'd by fate, ſaw Carthage doom'd to fall,
And his own glories to a foe transferr'd
Leſs than his equal once, his conqu'ror now.
But 'twas not long that SATAN ſo endur'd,
For now the conſcious ſenſe of former deeds
Bold, though unbleſt, and high innate diſdain
Of mean capitulation and demur
Rous'd his proud heart, like a hot courſer ſpurr'd,
To chafe and laſh his languid courage up:
Red'ning he ſwell'd, and gnaw'd his nether lip
For vengeance that it would not give him words
To hurl defiance on th' advancing foe:
When GABRIEL, noting his diſorder'd mien
And haggard aſpect, ſtrait beſpoke the fiend.
Thus ever may the foe of CHRIST be found
Speechleſs, abaſh'd, ſtruck down of Heav'n and quell'd!
How long, malicious Spi'rit, wilt thou perſiſt
To trouble this vex'd earth? How long to haunt
This righteous perſon, whoſe ſtrong virtue mocks
Thy faint attempts? Warn'd by this ſhame, avaunt!
Hence, baffled Tempter! roaming thus at large,
Thou doſt but ſhew by melancholy proof,
That a tormented conſcience never reſts.

As the fierce panther, through the ribs transfix'd,
Writhes round the bloody weapon in his ſide,
And tugs it to and fro with foamy teeth,
Mad'ning with pain and gnaſhing at his wound;
So 'gainſt himſelf and foe alike enrag'd,
Hell's gloomy Lord, by this deſerved taunt
Cut to the heart, with many a hard eſſay
Struggled for voice; at length collecting breath,
Theſe words diſdainful, though of their full tone
And energy abated, found their way.

GABRIEL, the brave in danger earn renown;
True valor ſpares the weak, but thou, more wiſe
Than valiant, ſtudieſt well the ſafer hour,
When to come forth and wage inglorious war
'Gainſt unprovided foes; if CHEMOS then,
Or ſome ſlight Cherub, croſs thy wary path,
Woe to the ſtraggler! if thy barbed ſpear
Can make ſafe tilt at his unweapon'd ſide.
But I, who day and night have pac'd this globe,
Found in all quarters, I, who never ſhun'd,
Rather have ſought, thy walk, am left to roam
Free and of thee unqueſtion'd from the hour,
When on the confines of this new-made world
We parlied under Eden's ſhady fence,
To th' inſtant now, when faint and ill at eaſe,

Unwarlike Angel, thou haſt found me here
Nerveleſs, and little more than match for thee.
To whom th' indignant Virtue thus reply'd;
If SATAN here is found in evil plight,
He's found of me unſought. Thine own dark wiles,
Degen'rate Spi'rit, and Heav'n's all-ruling hand
Have caſt thee in my way. Muſt I turn off
From duty's road direct becauſe forſooth
A wounded adder hiſſes in my path?
Why didſt thou preſs into this place of prayer,
This hallow'd ſolitude, where CHRIST hath breath'd
A charm, that withers up thy blaſted ſtrength?
Could'ſt thou not learn, by late experience taught,
There is a ſphere about the Son of God,
In which no ſpi'rit like thee accurſt can draw
His breath blaſpheming? At a word begone!
Though with my foot I could have ſpurn'd thee hence,
I tread not on the fall'n; nor do I vaunt
Conqueſt of thee; that to a mightier arm,
Rebel to God, to God's own Son thou ow'ſt,
To CHRIST, not GABRIEL: Nor ſhalt thou alone
Stoop to his name, but every idol God,
And ev'ry pow'r of darkneſs with their prince,
And Sin hell-born, and thy foul offspring Death.

Whereto, by theſe prophetic words appall'd,
SATAN with taunting argument replied.
Since this angelic form, from death exempt,
Sometimes ſhall yield to aches and tranſient pains
And natural ailments for awhile endur'd,
What wonder, if etherial ſpi'rit like me,
Pent in this atmoſphere and fain to breathe
The lazy fogs of this unwholeſome earth,
Pine for his native clime? What, if he droop,
Worn out with care and toil? Wert thou as I
Driv'n to and fro, and by God's thunder hurl'd
From Heav'n's high ramparts, would that ſilken form
Abide the toſſing on hell's fiery lake?
Hadſt thou like me travers'd the vaſt profound
Of antient Night, and beat the weary wing
Through ſtormy Chaos, voyage rude as this
Wou'd ruffle thoſe fine plumes. I've kept my courſe
Through hurricanes, the leaſt of which let looſe
On this firm globe would winnow it to duſt,
Snap like a weaver's thread the mighty chain,
That links it to heav'n's adamantine floor,
And whirl it through the Infinite of Space.
And what haſt thou, ſoft Cherub, done the whilſt?
What are thy labors? What haſt thou atchiev'd?

Heav'n

Heav'n knows no winter, there no tempeſts howl;
To breathe perpetual ſpring, to ſleep ſupine
On flowery beds of amaranth and roſe,
Voluptuous ſlavery, was GABRIEL's choice:
His boſom never drew th' indignant ſigh,
That rent my heart, when call'd to morning hymn
I paid compulſive homage at God's throne,
Warbling feign'd hallelujahs to his praiſe.
Spirits of abject mould, and ſuch art thou,
May call this eaſy ſervice, for they love
Ignoble eaſe; to me the fulſome taſk
Was bittereſt ſlavery, and though I fell,
I fell oppoſing; exil'd both from heav'n
Freedom and I ſhar'd the ſame glorious fall.
Go back then to thy drudgery of praiſe,
Practiſe new canticles and tune thy throat
To flattery's fawning pitch; leave me my groans,
Leave me to teach theſe echoes how to curſe;
Here let me lie and make this rugged ſtone
My couch, my canopy this ſtormy cloud,
That rolls ſtern winter o'er my fenceleſs head;
'Tis freedom's privilege, nor tribute owes,
Nor tribute pays to Heav'n's deſpotic King.
Thus whilſt he ſpake, the Savior of mankind,
New ris'n from pray'r, drew nigh; whereat the fiend,

Or e'er the awful preſence met his eye,
Shivering, as one by ſudden fever ſeiz'd,
Turn'd deadly pale; then fell to earth convuls'd.
Dire were the yells he vented, fierce the throes
That writh'd his tortur'd frame, whilſt through the ſeams
And chinks, that in his jointed armour gap'd,
Blue ſulph'rous flames in livid flaſhes burſt,
So hot the hell within his fuel'd heart,
Which like a furnace ſev'n times heated rag'd.
Meanwhile the winged Meſſenger of Heaven,
GABRIEL, with horror and amazement fix'd,
Stood motionleſs behind his orbed ſhield:
Not ſo the Savior; he with look compos'd
And ſtedfaſt noting the diſaſtrous plight
Of that tormented fiend, theſe words addreſs'd.
SATAN, thou ſee'ſt the ſerpent's primal curſe
At length falls heavy on thy bruiſed head;
When man loſt Paradiſe, by thee betray'd,
This was thy doom, Deceiver; and although
Ages have roll'd on ages ſince, yet God,
Who from eternal to eternal lives
Bleſſed for evermore, computes not time
As thou, whoſe mis'ry makes ſhort years ſeem long.
Yet was the interim thine, and thou, who firſt
Brought'ſt ſin into the world, haſt reign'd in ſin:

Thou

Thou hadſt the power of death, but I through death
Am deſtin'd to deſtroy that power and thee.
And now my hour is come, I go to death,
That all through me may live; therefore begone!
Get thee behind me! Thou haſt now no part
On earth, thy dwelling is prepar'd in hell:
There when we meet, expect to meet thy doom.
This ſaid, the fiend replied not but with groans,
Nor ſtaid the Angel longer than to turn
One laſt ſad look upon his proſtrate foe,
Then flew to heav'n. The Savior bent his ſteps
In ſearch of his diſciples; them he found
Wrapt as before in ſleep.—Sleep on, he cried,
And henceforth take your reſt: It is enough:
The hour is come. Behold! the Son of man
Into the hands of ſinners is betray'd:
Riſe, let us go! The traitor is at hand.
And lo! while yet he ſpake a mingled crew
Arm'd and unarm'd approach; before them all
JUDAS advancing thus beſpeaks the throng:
Whom I ſhall kiſs is He, the CHRIST; Him ſeize
And in ſafe keeping hold.—Upon the word
He gives the trait'rous greeting, and exclaims,
Hail, Maſter!—When at once the ſwarming crowd
Ruſh in a ſpace, then ſtand in circle round,

Like

Like blood-hounds held at bay, their eager eyes
Fix'd on his face, which to behold they rear
Their flaming torches, whilſt the proſpect round
Glares with the ruddy blaze; a ghaſtly troop,
Like that dread chorus, which the tragic bard
Pour'd on the ſcene, when the Athenian wives
Dropt their abortive burthens with affright,
To ſee their ſnaky locks and fiery brands
Kindled in Phlegethon's ſulphureous waves:
So glares that haggard crew; in front they ſee
JESUS in conſcious majeſty unmov'd,
Behind him to ſome little ſpace withdrawn
PETER and JAMES and JOHN, the choſen Three,
Small band, but in their Leader's power a hoſt
Invincible, 'gainſt whom whole armies leagu'd
Were but as chaff before the whirlwind's blaſt,
Had he ſo will'd; but now with accent firm,
Whom ſeek ye? he demands: They anſwer make,
JESUS of Nazareth.—I am the man,
JESUS replies; He, whom ye ſeek, is found.
His air, his utterance and that voice divine,
Which could have arm'd Heav'n's legions in his cauſe,
Or gulph'd them to the center at a word,
Swift as the vollied thunder ſmote their hearts,
And hurl'd them to the ground: Headlong they fell

With hideous craſh, nor ever thence had ris'n,
Had not his gracious purpoſe ſo decreed
For man's redemption: Up they riſe from earth,
And in like manner to the ſame demand
A ſecond time make anſwer; he repeats—
I told you, and ye heard, that I am He:
If therefore me ye ſeek, let theſe depart.
Then burſt the chidden zeal of PETER forth,
Arm'd with a ſword he ruſh'd upon the throng
And at the foremoſt aim'd a random blow,
That gaſh'd the caitiff's head, but miſs'd the life.
Put up thy ſword, raſh man! the Savior cries,
Did I want reſcue, would I aſk of thee,
With all my Father's Angels at command?
No! let me do His will and drink His cup:
And you, that here encompaſs me about,
As 'twere a felon ye came out to take,
With ſwords and ſtaves, ſuffer thus far, behold!
The wound his weapon makes my touch ſhall heal:
'Tis done! Know all, that they, who take the ſword,
Shall periſh by the ſword. What needs this ſtir,
This midnight plotting and this traitor's kiſs,
Theſe ſtaves, theſe torches and this arm'd array
To make one harmleſs peaceful man your prize?
You ſaw me daily in my public walks,

Freely we commun'd, for you harm'd me not;
You heard me in the Temple; for I taught
In very zeal the ſimple way of truth,
Lab'ring full hard to turn your hearts to God:
If this were my offence, why not arreſt
Your Preacher in the act, and drag to death
Him, who would fain have train'd you in the road
To life eternal? Never on the poor
Turn'd I my back; I courted not the rich;
Were this my fault, in the broad face of day
Ye might have ſmitten me and earn'd the praiſe
Of the proud Phariſee and braggart Scribe:
I fed the hungry and I heal'd your ſick,
I ſuccour'd the tormented and poſſeſt;
Are theſe the heinous acts for which I die?
In field, in city, in frequented ways
The wretched flock'd around, if theſe be crimes,
Why is their puniſhment ſo long reſerv'd
To this dark hour of night? The ſun himſelf
Witneſs'd my doings, ſo might he my death.
But ſee! my followers are diſpers'd and fled,
And I ſtand in your peril here alone:
No need to fear him, who makes no defence;
Conduct me to my doom: God's will be done!
This ſaid, their ſacrilegious hands they laid

Upon

Upon his ſacred perſon: He in' the midſt
With meek compoſure and ſubmitted look
March'd ſlowly onward, as they led the way
To the proud dome of CAIAPHAS, high-prieſt
Of MOLOCH than of God more fitly call'd.
Oh! ye hard hearts, was this the Paſchal Lamb,
Ye worſe than pagan butchers, whom ye cull'd
Pure and unſpotted for your bloody feaſt?
Well did your lawgiver decree this day
A record and memorial to be kept
Throughout your generations to all time;
A memorable day, a noted feaſt
Your ſtubborn incredulity hath made it.
To you a day of darkneſs and diſgrace;
To us Salvation's glorious dawn, to us
By our great Captain led, the Lord of Life,
Who through the darkſome avenue of death
And depths myſterious of the mazy grave,
Holding the clue of prophecy in hand,
Unravell'd all the ways of Providence
And to our view ſet ope the golden gates
Of Paradiſe regain'd, whence light and life
And bliſs eternal beam on all mankind;
For all, who with their lips confeſs the Lord,

And in their hearts believe that from the dead
God in his pow'r hath rais'd him, ſhall be ſav'd.
Meanwhile the prince of hell, whom CHRIST had left
Rolling in torments on the ſtony rock,
Mad as leviathan, when tempeſt-wreck'd
Flound'ring he lies upon the ſhoaly beach,
Now to one laſt and deſperate effort driv'n,
Straining each nerve with many a dolorous groan
Half his huge length had rear'd. His right hand graſp'd
His ſpear, the other on his buckler propp'd
Pillow'd his head, raging with pain and thoughts
Black as the night around him: To ariſe
And ſtand ſurpaſs'd his power; in vain he ſpread
His feathery vans to raiſe him in the air;
About him all the ground with azure plumes
Beat from his ſhatter'd pinions was beſtrewn:
Deſpair now ſeiz'd him, now too late he rued
His blaſphemies and bold rebellious taunts
'Gainſt Heav'n's Omnipotent, his Judge incens'd:
Hopeleſs of mercy now he curs'd his doom
Of immortality, and as he roll'd
His haggard eyes in night, hell's flaming gulph,
Terrific viſion, ſeem'd to burſt upon him
With treble horrors charg'd; then with a ſigh,

That

That ſtrain'd his heaving cors'let, he breath'd forth
In murmuring lamentations theſe ſad words.
Ah! who will lift me from this iron bed,
On which Prometheus-like for ever link'd
And rivetted by dire neceſſity
I'm doom'd to lie, and wail the cruel boon
Of immortality, my baneful fate?
O earth, earth, earth! Cannot my groans pervade
Thy ſtony heart to' embowel me alive
Under this rock, before to-morrow's ſun
Find me here weltering in the ſordid duſt,
A ſpectacle of ſcorn to all my hoſt,
Wont to behold in me their kingly chief?
Will not ſome pitying earthquake gulph me down
To where the everlaſting fountains ſleep,
That in thoſe wat'ry caverns I might ſlake
Theſe fires, that ſhrivel my parch'd ſinews up?
Ah! whither ſhall I turn? who will unbrace
This ſcalding mail, that burns my tortur'd breaſt
Worſe than the ſhirt of Neſſus? Oh! for pity,
Grant me a moment's interval of eaſe,
Avenging, angry Deity! Draw back
Thy red right hand, that with the light'ning arm'd
Thruſt to my heart makes all my boiling blood
Hiſs in my veins; or if thou wilt deſtroy

Whom thou haſt vanquiſh'd, terminate theſe feuds
'Twixt good and evil, thee and me, reduce
This incorruptible to mould'ring duſt,
Make Death a parricide, and ſo conclude
Me and my ſufferings and my ſins at once.
But 'twill not be. Happy I might have been,
Immortal I muſt be: God can create
Nothing but bliſs; I made the pains I feel:
Sorrow had no exiſtence, Death no name
'Till I loſt heav'n; to be was to be bleſt,
And beings bleſt could never ceaſe to be.
This earth and man its habitant were good,
Till envy, pride, rebellion, in my heart
Engend'ring, marr'd God's perfect work with ſin;
And but for ſin the univerſe were heav'n:
So am I author of the hell within me,
And theſe tormenting fires God cannot quench;
For that would be to turn from what he is,
Parent of good, and to become like me
Patron and friend of evil. Reas'ning thus
I muſt renounce all hope of future peace,
And wage eternal enmity with God,
Whom longer to oppoſe I now deſpair,
And under whoſe ſtrong hand weigh'd down to earth
Proſtrate, confounded, I can riſe no more.

Muſt I be ever thus? Muſt theſe fierce pangs,
Or worſe, if worſe can be, torment me ever?
Are there no means to make a truce with Heav'n?
Submiſſion, penitence, atonement, pray'rs
And interceſſions—Oh! fallacious, vain,
Impracticable terms! Can pride ſhed tears,
Falſehood keep faith, or perjury paſs it's oath
Upon that Judge, to whom all hearts are known?
It cannot be. Ages of ſin have roll'd
'Twixt me and pardon, gulph impaſſable.
Man's loſs of Paradiſe, a delug'd world,
Sin paramount on earth, the nations turn'd
From God to idols, ſcarce a remnant left
Of this his choſen race, corruption ſpread
Ev'n to' the heart of Judah', and from this Mount,
Sad witneſs of my overthrow and ſhame,
Scene of my triumphs once, his ſtandard torn
And hell's proud banners flanting in it's place;
Theſe and a countleſs multitude of wrongs
Cry in the catalogue ſo loud againſt me,
That ſhould the thunder of God's vengeance ſleep,
Mercy herſelf would ſeize th' uplifted bolt
And ſpeed the ling'ring blow. What is my hope,
If ſuch the taſk to purchaſe peace for man,
Man ſo ſubordinate in ſin to me,

The ſpring and fountain-head of that foul ſtream,
Which he at diſtance drank? If CHRIST muſt die
For man, if nothing leſs than God's own Son
Can ſtand betwixt the Father's wrath and man,
What mediator can be found for me?
None, and no wonder if his wrath, withdrawn
From man now pardon'd, fall with worſe recoil
On my devoted head: Ev'n now it falls.
Me like an eagle in my tow'ring flight,
From the proud zenith of the ſun's bright ſphere
Headlong he hurls to earth with ſhatter'd wing
And plumes diſhevell'd grov'ling in the duſt:
Me, the ſole mover of man's foul revolt,
He marks for tenfold vengeance; for if CHRIST,
The patient meek Redeemer, groans in paĩh,
What ſhall the Tempter feel? If on the rack
Of agony his guiltleſs brow ſweats blood,
Well may this body' of ſin burſt out in flames,
A conflagration horrible to ſight,
And blazing beacon to th' aſtoniſh'd world.
And what is this vile JUDAS, who ſeduc'd
By wily MAMMON ſells his Maſter's life?
What PETER's ſelf, whom, had not JESUS pray'd,
I'd ſifted into chaff? Theſe purblind prieſts,
Who with their half-ſhut eyes aſkance behold

Their

Their own Meſſias in his wond'rous acts,
Yet give thoſe wonders to the powers of hell,
And trembling for their craft complot his death,
What are they? Whence but from myſelf their lyes?
'Tis I in them, and not they of themſelves,
That kill the Prince of Peace; his guiltleſs blood
Sprinkles their hands, but in a flood-gate tide
Redder than ſcarlet whelms my ſinking ſoul.
He ceas'd, and in his mantle hid his face
For ſhame and ſorrow to be thus ſurpriz'd;
For MAMMON, ever on the foot by night,
Had ſpied him through the gloom, and thus began.
What ails thee, Prince of air, that here thou lieſt
On the dull earth, not reſting it ſhould ſeem
From victory, but vanquiſh'd and o'erthrown?
Vanquiſh'd, alas! and in the duſt o'erthrown
By God's all-pow'rful Son, SATAN replied,
Too ſure I am; and how it wrings this heart
So to be found of thee words cannot ſpeak.
Yet thou of all the ſpirits heav'n hath loſt
Art he, of whom my pride hath leaſt to fear;
For thou wilt not as others gall my ſpleen
With ſcorn and taunting: Thou, a friendly chief,
Haſt pity for the ſorrows of a friend;
To thee my valor and deſerts are known,

For thou wert ever neareſt where I fought
In front of danger on the battle's edge;
Thou know'ſt the hazard and the chance of war,
And with what malice fortune thwarts our beſt,
Our braveſt efforts: Scarr'd thyſelf with wounds,
Thou from the wounded wilt not turn aſide;
Therefore, O MAMMON, as my hand to thee
Were preſent, didſt thou need it, ſo to me,
Thy ſovereign in diſtreſs, reach forth thine hand,
And, if thou canſt, upraiſe me from this fall;
If thou canſt not, let not my armies know
Their leader's fate, be mindful of my fame,
And bury this ſad ſecret in thy breaſt.
He ſaid, nor need had he of further ſuit,
For MAMMON now had put forth all his ſtrength
To raiſe him from the ground; in his ſtrong graſp
He ſeiz'd his giant limbs in armour clad
Of adamant and gold, a ponderous wreck:
Earth trembled with the ſhock; dire were the groans
Hell's Monarch vented, horrible the pains,
That rack'd his ſtiffen'd joints; yet on he toil'd
Till by Heav'n's ſufferance rather than by aid
Of arm angelic once again he rear'd
His huge Titanian ſtature to the ſkies,
And ſtood; yet not as late with look erect

And lofty mien: Ruin was in his face;
Sordid and ſoil'd with ignominious duſt
His robe imperial, and his azure wings
And gloſſy locks, that o'er his ſhoulders curl'd,
Diſhevell'd now, and in like tatter'd trim
With veſſel tempeſt-torn or by the force
Of engines weigh'd from bottom of the deep,
Founder'd in creek or harbor, where ſhe lay
Gulph'd in the ſlimy ooze; when MAMMON thus.
Joy to our gallant Leader! Once again
With firm foot planted on the ſubject earth
We ſtand as ſpi'rits by our own ſtrength redeem'd
Erect and dauntleſs. Wherefore droops that eye,
As it would root itſelf into the ſoil,
From which with vigor new reſtor'd you riſe
Antæus-like indignant of defeat?
Oft, when in ſearch of gold or ſilver ore
In earth's metallic veins, I've labor'd long
And hard, in damp and darkſome caverns pent,
Mining the ſolid rock, at length to light
And the free air emerg'd, I've found my limbs
Stiffen'd with cramps, or with cold ague numb'd:
Yet never did my patient courage droop
Or ſlack it's gainful toil. I am not apt,
When wealth or glory can be bought with pain,

To ſtagger at the terms; and if it pleaſe
Heav'n's Monarch in his vengeance to attach
To this eternal be'ing eternal pain,
Good hope, as poiſons may be ſheath'd by uſe,
So long familiarity with pain
May draw it's ſting, and habitude convert
It's hoſtile property to friendly eaſe.
But thy great heart perhaps is rent with grief,
Of pain diſdainful as of leſſer ill:
And wherefore grieve? Our joys were loſt with heaven,
Our paſſions all revers'd, our natures chang'd,
Virtues to vices, amity to hate;
Deeds, that in heav'n had been our ſhame, in hell
Become our glory'; and whilſt the world endures,
Whilſt evil is to good oppos'd, we keep
The fight at doubtful iſſue, oft-times win
The glorious field and triumph over God.
Why did I tempt ISCARIOT to betray
His guiltleſs Maſter? 'Twas not that I lov'd
The traitor, no, the treaſon was my joy;
I laugh at fools in their own folly caught:
The wretch I tempted, him I ſhall deſtroy,
And like a worn-out weapon caſt him by;
He ſhall not live to ſee his Maſter's fall,
And for the ſorry purchaſe of his ſin

He

He ſhall but touch the adder's ſting and die:
So much for JUDAS! Thus at once I ſlay
Two victims and refine upon revenge.
To whom with clouded brow and nothing cheer'd
By this diſcourſe hell's gloomy Power replied.
MAMMON, you well deſcribe the rueful change
Wrought in us by our overthrow from heav'n,
And for ſuch ſolace as in thought you find
Pondering the ſad eternity of pain,
My argument ſhall never be employ'd
To make that little leſs; but when you vaunt
ISCARIOT's treaſon and th' impending fall
Of that juſt Perſon, now before the bar
Of envious judges, who ſhall doom his death,
You vaunt a deed, which, though the' elect of hell
Jointly with me adviſ'd, brings on us all
Ruin with loſs of empire, and all hope
So quenches, nought can ſtand us now in ſtead
But patience and your reconciling rules
To wont our natures to eternal pain.
My potency you know, and can you think
Leſs than the hand of God could hurl me down
To miſery like this? It muſt be God,
Who ſpeaks in CHRIST, the Father in the Son:
Though meek, Almighty he controuls the world

And me the world's late maſter; he deſtroys
Sin my begotten and Sin's offspring Death.
Oh! that I never had approach'd him more,
Foil'd in my firſt temptation. Now, ev'n now,
I feel a nature in me, not mine own,
That is my maſter and againſt my will
Enforces truths prophetic from my tongue,
Making me rev'rence whom in heart I hate:
I feel that now, though lifted from the ground,
I ſtand or move or ſpeak but as he wills,
By influence not by freedom: I perceive
Theſe exhalations, that the night breathes on me,
Are loaded with the vaporous ſteams of hell;
I ſcent them in the air, and well I know
The angel of deſtruction is abroad.
I cannot fly from fate; the man foredoom'd
To bruiſe my head is CHRIST, the time is come,
The prophecy is full; exil'd from hence,
As firſt from heav'n, my reign on earth is o'er,
And my laſt care is for thoſe hapleſs friends,
The partners of my fall, when I am gone
Left like a headleſs trunk. Warn them to fly
Impending ruin; ſure I am, when CHRIST
Breathes forth his ſacred ſpi'rit into the air,
His dying gaſp ſhall blow them like a ſpell

To

To the four winds of heav'n: Let them be gone
In time and ply the wing; there's ſhelter yet
In this wide world for them: Though I muſt hence,
They may abide, and though their names be loſt,
Their altars levell'd and their idols maim'd,
Yet ſhall their arts and offices endure,
Their influences ſtill ſhall draw the hearts
Of many; ſin ſhall not at once ſecede
From earth, nor darkneſs wholly yield to light.
To thee, auſpicious ſpi'rit, whoſe potent arm
Hath rais'd me from the ground, I can aſſure
A longer term of reſidence and power:
Thy empire in earth's inmoſt centre roots,
Thy influence circulates through all her veins;
Nor earth alone, but ocean wafts to thee
Continual tribute; commerce hails thy name;
In thee war triumphs, thee fair peace adores
And gilds the feathers of her dove with gold
To dedicate to thee her worldly god,
Thee, the laſt foe whom CHRIST ſhall chaſe from earth.
So ſpake the parting fiend in his laſt hour
Prophetic, father though he were of lyes:
To him the inferior dæmon anſwer none
Attempted, but in ghaſtly ſilence ſtood
Gazing with horror on his chieftain's face,

That chang'd all hues by fits, as when the north,
With nitrous vapors charg'd, convulſive ſhoots
It's fiery darts athwart the trembling pole,
Making heav'n's vault a canopy of blood;
So o'er the viſage of the exorcis'd fiend
Alternate gleams like meteors came and went;
And ever and anon he beat his breaſt,
That quick and ſhort with lab'ring pulſes heav'd.
One piteous look he upward turn'd, one ſigh
From his ſad heart he fain had ſent to heav'n,
But ere the hopeleſs meſſenger could leave
His quiv'ring lips, by ſudden impulſe ſeiz'd
He finds himſelf uplifted from the earth;
His azure wings, to ſooty black now chang'd,
In wide expanſe from either ſhoulder ſtretch
For flight involuntary: Up he ſprings
Whirl'd in a fiery vortex round and round;
As when the Lybian wilderneſs caught up
In ſandy pillar by the eddying winds
Moves horrible, the grave of man and beaſt;
Him thus aſcending the fork'd light'ning ſmites
With ſidelong volley, whilſt loud thunders rock
Heav'n's echoing vault, when all at once, behold!
Caught in the ſtream of an impetuous guſt
High in mid-air, ſwift on the level wing

Northward he ſhoots and like a comet leaves
Long fiery track behind, ſpeeding his courſe
Strait to the realms of Chaos and old Night,
Hell-bound and to Tartarean darkneſs doom'd.
His ſad aſſociate, left on earth, look'd up
And with like conſcious terror ey'd his flight,
As when the merchant trembling for his freight
Looks ſeaward from ſome promontory's top,
And thence deſcries his gallant bark a wreck
Driving at mercy of the winds and waves
Full on the rocky ſhoal, her certain grave;
Then having bid farewell to all his hope
In this one bottom ſtor'd, now loſt to ſight,
Turns with a ſigh aſide, and o'er the ſtrand
With heavy heart takes homeward his ſlow way.
So ſigh'd the fiend, and for his own ſad fate
Trembling yet fearful to attempt the wing,
Slunk cow'ring off veil'd in the ſhades of night.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

This Book, propoſing to treat of the trial and condemnation of Chriſt, opens with an invocation to the Evangeliſts, the ſacred hiſtorians of that event.——Chriſt, brought before the prieſts and elders in council, accuſed by the witneſſes, interrogated by Caiaphas, perſiſts in keeping ſilence, till being ſolemnly called upon to declare himſelf, he anſwers by an affirmation of the truth. Inſtantly all voices are let looſe upon him, accuſing him of blaſphemy and pronouncing him worthy of death: He is delivered over to mockery and inſult. The Jews reſolve to arraign him before Pilate on the following morning. He turns and looks upon Peter, who according to prediction had three ſeveral times denied him. The ſorrow and contrition of that Diſciple is deſcribed; he retires apart to bewail his crime and ſupplicate forgiveneſs. His prayer and confeſſion in the temple-porch. The council of the Jews reſort to Pilate next morning and appeal againſt Chriſt. He informs them that by the Roman law no judgment can be given till the accuſed is confronted with his accuſers, and heard in his defence. Now commences the trial of Chriſt before Pilate, who, finding nothing worthy of death in that juſt perſon, refers him to Herod as belonging to his juriſdiction. Herod, after mocking him, arrays him in a gorgeous robe, and in that apparel ſends him back to Pilate. He again appears in the judgment hall before Pilate, who after many fruitleſs efforts to ſave him, the Jews ſtill urging him by their clamorous importunity to crucify him, finding no other way to prevent a tumult of the people, after declaring himſelf innocent of the blood of Jeſus by the ceremony of waſhing his hands before the multitude, delivers him to be crucified.

CALVARY.

BOOK V.

THE CONDEMNATION OF CHRIST.

YE ſacred Guides, whoſe plain unvarniſh'd page,
Penn'd by the hand of Truth, records the ſcene,
Where CHRIST before the bar of impious men,
Patient of all their ſcorn, arraign'd, betray'd
And of his own abandon'd, ſilent ſtands,
You I invoke; ſo from the ſame pure ſource,
Whence my faith flows, ſhall alſo flow my ſong,
Not idly babbling, like that ſhallow rill
Trickling at foot of the Parnaſſian Mount,
But deep, ſerene, to hallow'd airs attun'd:
Aid me from Heav'n, where now before God's throne
In evangelic attributes ye ſtand
Six-wing'd and thick beſpangled o'er with eyes,
Ranging all points before you and behind,
Seraphic minſtrels, chanting day and night

Your ceaſeleſs hallelujahs to the name
Of Him, who was and is and is to come.
Led by your hand with trembling ſtep I preſs
The ſacred ground, which my Redeemer trode,
Now like a lamb to ſlaughter led, and now
Pendent, Oh horror! on the bloody tree;
And whilſt to tell his ſacrifice of love,
His ſoul-diſſolving agonies I ſtrive,
My heart melts into ſorrows deep as thoſe,
When the ſad daughters of Jeruſalem
Water'd his paſſage to the croſs with tears.
Muſing my pious theme, as fits a bard
Far onward in the wint'ry track of age,
I ſhun the Muſes haunts, nor dalliance hold
With fancy by the way, but travel on
My mournful road, a pilgrim grey with years;
One that finds little favor with the world,
Yet thankful for it's leaſt benevolence
And patient of it's taunts; for never yet
Lur'd I the popu'lar ear with gibing tales,
Or ſacrific'd the modeſty of ſong,
Harping lewd madrigals at drunken feaſts
To make the vulgar ſport and win their ſhout.
Me rather the ſtill voice delights, the praiſe
Whiſper'd, not publiſh'd by fame's braying trump:

Be thou my herald, Nature! Let me pleaſe
The ſacred few, let my remembrance live
Emboſom'd by the virtuous and the wiſe;
Make me, O Heav'n! by thoſe, who love thee, lov'd:
So when the widow's and the children's tears
Shall ſprinkle the cold duſt, in which I ſleep
Pompleſs and from a ſcornful world withdrawn,
The laurel, which it's malice rent, ſhall ſhoot
So water'd into life, and mantling throw
It's verdant honors o'er my graſſy tomb.
Here in mid-way of my unfiniſh'd courſe,
Doubtful of future time whilſt now I pauſe
To fetch new breath and trim my waining lamp,
Fountain of Life, if I have ſtill ador'd
Thy mercy and remember'd Thee with awe
Ev'n in my mirth, in the gay prime of youth—
So conſcience witneſſes, the mental ſcribe,
That regiſters my errors, quits me here—
Propitious Pow'r, ſupport me! and if death,
Near at the fartheſt, meditates the blow
To cut me ſhort in my prevented taſk,
Spare me a little, and put by the ſtroke,
Till I recount his overthrow and hail
Thy Son victorious riſing from the grave.

Now

Now to that diſmal ſcene return, my thoughts!
Where CHRIST in midſt of an irreverent crew,
Uſher'd by torches through the darkling ſtreets,
And now at ſummit of the holy Mount
Arriv'd, before the pontiff's lofty gate,
Waiting the call of impious pride, attends.
The halls and lobbies vomit forth a ſwarm
Of ſaucy ſervitors with ideot ſtare
Gazing the wond'rous Man, and venting loud
Their coward mockeries: He ſtands unmov'd.
Great is the ſtir within, and on the poſt
Through all the palace runs the buzzing news
Of this great Prophet's capture, circling round
With ever new enlargement of ſtrange ſights
And fearful doings in the garden ſeen
Of thoſe who took him. CAIAPHAS meanwhile
Summons the Temple-chiefs, elders and ſcribes,
A haſty Sanhedrim: No longer now
With ſtately ſtep in meaſur'd pace they march;
Huddled together by their fears they flock,
They cluſter in a throng, ſafeſt ſo deem'd,
And fill the council ſeats. In ſpeech abrupt
And brief their hierarch the cauſe expounds
Of their ſo ſudden meeting—CHRIST is ſeiz'd,

The

The Prophet, whom they dreaded, is in hold,
Th'Enchanter, who by league with Belzebub
Scar'd them with magic ſpells, is at their door;
Now is the time to put his art to proof,
Now is the moment to decide if thus
Their unreveal'd Meſſias ſhall appear
After long promiſe in this abject ſtate
A ſhackled pris'ner, or a conquering king.
Admit him! with faint voice ſome two or three
Of the leaſt timorous cry.—Behold, he comes!
The rabble throng ruſh in, and at the bar
Of the immur'd divan preſent him bound
With cords, his raiment ſoil'd with hands profane,
His head uncover'd and his ſacred locks
By the rude winds and ruder men deſpoil'd
Of their propriety, diſhevell'd, ſpread
Like ſhatter'd fragments on the branching top
Of piny Lebanon after a ſtorm.

Silence now reign'd, the roar of tongues was huſh'd,
And expectation with ſuſpended breath
Sate watchful when ſome ſign or word of power
Should in a miracle break forth upon them.
None ſuch that patient Sufferer vouchſaf'd,
Nor menace nor complaint his eye beſpake,
But meek ſerene compoſure. Noting this,

As cowards out of danger loudeſt vaunt,
The council now took heart: Then ſoon were heard
The lying tongues of witneſſes ſuborn'd
Various and loud; but theſe no order kept;
Falſhood with falſhood claſh'd, and each to each
Irreconcileable, as all to truth:
Shame held the council mute, for vileſt hearts,
Cloak'd in the robes of judgment, will affect
Some outward ſhew of what they ought to be,
Then moſt malicious when moſt ſeeming juſt.
Confuſion now enſu'd and perjury
In it's own labyrinth had loſt itſelf,
When ſome of graver note within the pale
Of juſtice ſeated, but far thence remov'd
In conſcience and in heart, ſtarted new charge,
Averring they had heard the Pris'ner ſay—
I will deſtroy this temple made with hands,
And within three days will another build
Made without hands.—The charge was gravely urg'd,
And, colour'd to the ſemblance of a plot,
Breath'd ſacrilegious menace to God's houſe,
Fit matter for deſcant pontifical:
When CAIAPHAS, as foremoſt in degree
So firſt to ſound forth danger and affix
Solemnity to malice, from his ſtate

With

With magiſterial dignity aroſe,
And ſternly fixing on the face divine
His eye inquiſitorial, thus began.
Hear'ſt thou what theſe alledge? The words in charge
Stand witneſs'd by theſe preſent: Face to face
Th' accuſers they and thou th' accuſed meet:
Juſtice is open. What is thy defence?
Anſwereſt thou nothing?—Nothing anſwer'd he,
But as a lamb before it's ſhearers mute
He open'd not his mouth; the myſtery couch'd
Under thoſe words, prophetic of his death
And following reſurrection, to expound
To their perverted minds beſeem'd not him,
Searcher of hearts and Savior of mankind:
Silent not pertinacious he endur'd
Their ſcorn, nor did his meek demeanour ſhew
More than the dignity of conſcious truth,
Which knows itſelf prejudg'd and ſcorns a plea.
But CAIAPHAS, who brook'd not this repulſe,
And ſtill occaſion ſought from his own lips
By ſubtlety to' enſnare him, thus re-urg'd
Queſtion with ſolemn adjuration back'd.
Hear me, thou man accus'd, and anſwer make
I do adjure thee by the living God
To what I now demand. Art thou the CHRIST,

The very CHRIST, Son of th' eternal God,
Or art thou not? Reſolve us who thou art!
Then JESUS by this ſolemn adjuration urg'd,
Lifting his eyes to heav'n in mute appeal,
Whilſt all his Father's virtue in his face
Effulgent beam'd, theſe glorious words pronounc'd;
Hear them, O heav'n, and Oh! record them, earth,
Write them, ye mortals, on your hearts—I am,
I am the CHRIST; all that you aſk I am;
And ye ſhall ſee me coming in the clouds
Of heav'n, enthron'd at the right hand of Power.
As when on rapine bent a ſavage horde
Arab or Indian, in ſome ſandy dell
Or by the ſedgy lake in ambuſh lodg'd,
Upon the watch-word by their leader giv'n
Leap from their treach'rous lair with ſudden yell
And bloody weapons waving to ſurprize
And overpower th' unguarded traveller,
Fatally trapp'd into their murderous ſnare;
So at the ſignal of their prieſtly chief
Uproſe the dire divan with ruſhing ſound,
Like roar of diſtant waters. Terror-ſtruck,
Frantic as Bromius, with furious hands
Th' enthuſiaſtic hierarch ſeiz'd his robes,
And into tatters like a cancell'd ſcroll

Tore

Tore them, exclaiming vehement and loud
That all might hear.—What need of further proof?
Ye' have heard his blaſphemy. How think ye, ſirs?
What may ſuch crime deſerve?—Th' infuriate prieſts
Seiz'd by like phrenſy with one voice pronounce—
Death be his ſentence!—Death through all the hall
Rebounding echoes back th' accurs'd decree.
Horrible ſentence! Murder hatch'd in hell;
Libation for the fiends! Dæmons, on you
And on your generations to all time
His righteous blood ſhall reſt. Now uproar wild
And horrid din ſucceeds: The ſcoffing crowd
Ruſh to the bar, ſo privileg'd, and there
With ſcurril taunts and blaſphemies revile
The patient Son of God. Oh thought of horror!
The Savior of mankind revil'd by man,
The Juſt by th' unjuſt! Others more profane
Vent their vile rheum upon his ſacred face,
Or ſmite him with their palms, then gibing cry—
Tell us who ſmote thee; propheſy, thou CHRIST!
Monſters, that CHRIST hath propheſied, your doom
Already by that Prophet is pronounc'd,
The lips you ſtrike have utter'd it: Behold!
Jeruſalem is fall'n, her towers are duſt,
Your city ſmokes in ruin: Lo! what piles

Of

Of mangled carcaſes; what horrid ſcenes
Of violated matrons: Hark! what ſcreams
Of infants butcher'd in their mothers arms;
And look! your temple blazes to the ſky;
It's beams of cedar overlaid with gold,
It's fretted roof with carvings rich emboſs'd,
And all it's glorious ſplendor feeds the flames
Inſatiate; mark how high their ſerpent ſpires
Hiſſing aſcend: God fans them in his ire:
Thither the wild beaſts of the deſart hie,
There carrion owls by midnight haunt, there dwells
The dragon, and the ſatyrs dance: 'Tis done!
That prophecy is ſeal'd. There yet remains
An awful conſummation unreveal'd,
Till God ſhall gather up your ſcatter'd race
Still vagrant o'er th' inhoſpitable earth.
Ah! wretched people, broken and diſpers'd,
Did ye preſerve the oracles of God
But to convict your own obduracy?
Sad nation, on whoſe neck the iron yoke
Of perſecution hard, too hard, hath lain,
And yet lies heavy, will ye not accept
A High Prieſt, holy, harmleſs, undefil'd,
From ſinners ſep'rate and exalted high
Above the heavens? And do ye not perceive

The

The word of JESUS in yourſelves fulfill'd?
Rue then the prophecy, which you provok'd,
Of faithleſs fathers ye ſtill faithleſs ſons!
Whilſt ſhuddering I recount the impious taunts
Of that blaſpheming rout: But neither taunts
Nor violence could ſhake the Savior's peace;
He in his own pure ſpi'rit collected ſtood,
Nor of their baſe revilings took account.
'Twas now that CHRIST, knowing himſelf denied
Three times of PETER, turn'd and look'd upon him.
He from the garden, where his Lord was ſeiz'd,
Following at diſtance JUDAS and his band,
Had kept his eye upon their moving fires,
And up the ſacred mount purſued their track,
Till at the palace-door he ſtood and ſought
Admiſſion with the crowd; when there behold!
A damſel at the portal ſcans him o'er
With ſcrutinizing eye and ſtrait exclaims—
Thou too wert in this Galilean's train;
Thou art of JESUS.—Sudden to his heart
The coward tremor runs and there ſuggeſts
The fear-conceived lye; before them all
With confidence to falſehood ill applied—
I know not what thou ſay'ſt—he ſtrait avers,
And to the porch goes forth: There in his ear

The cock his firſt ſhrill warning gives and ſings
The knell of conſtancy's predicted breach,
Of conſtancy, alas! too ſtrongly vouch'd
By him in raſh and over-weening zeal,
Boaſting like martyrdom with CHRIST himſelf,
Sole ſacrifice appointed for mankind.
But he, though of preſumption warn'd, by fear
Still haunted and the guilty dread of death,
Strait to a ſecond queſtioner replies—
I do not know the man—and to engage
Belief, binds down the falſehood with an oath,
Fatal appeal to Heav'n! inſult to God
And His all-righteous ears! Is this the man,
Who with ſuch glowing ardor ſelf-aſſur'd—
Though all ſhall be offended, I will not—
Proudly averr'd, and for that pride reprov'd—
Though I ſhould die with thee, dauntleſs rejoin'd,
Yet will I not deny thee—? Man, weak man,
Pride was not made for thee. If PETER fell
Preſuming, who ſhall ſay, Behold! I ſtand
In my own ſtrength nor aſk ſupport of God?
And now, as if devoted to his ſhame,
Curious to pry, yet fearful to be ſeen,
He mixes with the throng that crowd the hall;
And there once more is challeng'd for his ſpeech,

As

As ſavo'ring of the Galilean phraſe;
Then with reiterated oaths abjures
His Maſter the third time; when hark! again
The cock's loud ſignal echoes back the lye
In his convicted ear; the prophet bird
Strains his recording throat, and up to heav'n
Trumpets the trebled perjury and claps
His wings in triumph o'er preſumption's fall.
Oh! fall'n how low, is this thy promis'd faith,
Favor'd of CHRIST ſo highly? Know'ſt thou not,
Diſciple, thine own Lord? or know'ſt him only
In ſafety, in proſperity, in power,
For thine own ſelfiſh ends, a ſummer gueſt,
Prone to deſert him in the wint'ry hour
Of tribulation, poverty and woe?
Is thy frail memory of that ſlippery ſtuff,
That a friend's ſorrow waſhes out all trace
Of a friend's features? Look upon his eyes!
Behold, they turn on thee: Them doſt thou know?
Their language canſt thou read and from them draw
The conſcious reminiſcence thou diſown'ſt?
Mark, is their ſweetneſs loſt? Ah! no; they beam
Celeſtial grace, a ſanctity of ſoul
So melting ſoft with pity, ſuch a gleam
Of love divine attemp'ring mild reproof,

Where is the man, that to obtain that eye
Of mercy on his ſins would not forego
Life's deareſt comforts to embrace ſuch hope?
O death, death! where would be thy ſting, or where
Theſe awful tremblings, which thy coming ſtirs
In my too conſcious breaſt, might I aſpire
To hope my Judge would greet me with that look?
Vaunt not yourſelves, ye ſcorners, nor exult
In this recital of a good man's fall,
Faithful hiſtorian of his own offence:
But rather let it phyſic your proud ſpleen
To mark how mean, prevaricating, falſe
And deſpicable a vain-glorious man.
PETER's denial, David's heinous ſin,
And all the guilty lapſes of man's heart,
Though ſumm'd together into one account,
Each ſpot and blemiſh malice can ſearch out
To tarniſh the fair luſtre of a name,
Stand but as leſſons of humility,
Warnings of frailty to o'er-weening man;
And if our mournful page hath now ſet forth
The fall of virtue, let it next record
It's glorious reſurrection: We have ſhewn
The' offender in his ſhame, what now remains
But to diſplay the penitent? Behold!

Abaſh'd he ſtands bath'd in remorſeful tears:
One glance from his beloved Maſter's eye,
Like Nathan's parable, hath rous'd from ſleep
His drowſy conſcience. Mark, where he retires
To weep in ſolitude and purge his heart
By ſorrowful repentance of it's guilt.
O PETER, could my verſe fit offering make,
That verſe ſhould be beſtow'd upon thy tears.
Now the aſſembled elders and their chief,
After ſhort conſultation had, reſolve
With the next dawn of morning to arraign
Their Priſoner at the prætorian bar
Of PILATE, procurator for the ſtate
Imperial of Rome and Cæſar; he
Held judgment ſovereign of life and death
In tributary Jewry, judge corrupt,
And like Rome's venal emiſſaries prone
To every ſordid purpoſe; train'd in blood
And for tribunal bloody therefore fit.
Meanwhile forth iſſuing from the fatal hall,
Scene of his ſhame, the ſad Diſciple took
His penſive way acroſs the temple-court
Silent and ſolitary, ſeeking where
To' unboſom his full ſorrows and give up
His ſoul to pray'r, and pardon ſeek of God

For his revolt. Pale through night's curtain gleam'd
By fits the lunar intermittent ray,
That quiv'ring ſerv'd to light his lonely ſteps
To the fair gate call'd Beautiful, whoſe porch
High over-arch'd, on writhed columns propp'd
Of ſpiral braſs convolv'd, was for it's ſhade
Of CHRIST and his Diſciples much in queſt.
Hither he came, and falling on his knees,
Like the' humble publican ſmote on his breaſt,
And this confeſſion ſelf-accuſing made.
Here let me fall and in repentant tears
Weep out my ſoul upon theſe piti'leſs ſtones,
Made ſacred by His ſteps, whoſe awful name
Thrice blaſphem'd, thrice abjur'd, I dare not ſpeak,
Though in my ſupplication. Can I ſay,
Spare me, O God of mercy? Can I aſk
Pardon of God, unpardon'd of myſelf?
Oh! wretched recreant creature as I am,
What ſhall redeem me from this miſery,
And reconcile my conſcience to itſelf,
A perjur'd conſcience? Never more can peace
Dwell in this boſom; never can my ſoul
Aſcend out of the duſt, or lift a thought
In hope tow'rds heav'n. With JUDAS let me dwell,
Colleague in treaſon; with his ſin my ſin

In the' execration of all time be link'd.
Or ſhall I venture to look up and ſay,
O God, behold a wretch, who dares not ſue
For mercy but for mitigated wrath,
For puniſhment proportion'd to my bearing,
Protracted, not too ſudden, leſt it take
My ſenſes from me and with them all power
Of meditation, penance and atonement?
Spare me a little to abhor myſelf;
And if the arrow, which my conſcience drives
Into this guilty heart, draws not enough
Of it's vile blood to purify what's left,
Let the ſtrong hand of juſtice force it home
And finiſh me at once. Was I not warn'd
Of my preſumption, and a ſignal ſet
To number my denials, when I ſwore
Never to ſwerve but follow him to death?
Mine, like ISCARIOT's, was predicted ſin:
I ſpar'd not him, I call'd his wilful guilt,
Obſtinate malice; and can I now urge
Neceſſity my plea? All things are known
To CHRIST; the evil motions of my will
He ſaw, not over-rul'd: I might have pray'd
For grace, ſupport, prevention; I pray'd not,
But heedleſs of the prophecy and blind

Ruſh'd

Ruſh'd into ſin prepenſe, ſelf-will'd, ſelf-loſt.
What faſcination ſeiz'd me to draw forth
The ſword in raſh defence of Him, whoſe word
Legions of Angels could have call'd from heav'n?
And what prevaricating dæmon breath'd
The lye into my lips, when the ſame night,
Nay, the ſame hour, that ſaw me prompt to' oppoſe
My life to danger, ſaw me meanly ſhrink
From what I courted, and behind a lye
Three times repeated like a coward ſculk?
And did I not know CHRIST whom I denied?
Did I not know the Maſter whom I ſerv'd,
Who call'd me to him, pour'd into my heart
His heav'nly doctrines, rais'd my lowly thoughts
From the mean drudgery of a fiſher's trade,
And taught me in the energy of faith
To walk upon that ſea, in which ere-while
I dragg'd the net and toil'd for daily bread?
O memory, once my glory, now my curſe,
To what ſad purpoſe do I call thee home,
Abſent in danger, preſent in deſpair?
Is there a wonder done of CHRIST on earth
I have not witneſs'd? Did I not behold
Dead Lazarus revive at his command?
What ſhall I ſay to him, whom I ſaw die,

When

When living he arraigns me face to face?
What anſwer make to thoſe, whom I have ſerv'd
From one ſmall wallet with the bread of thouſands?
The very blind, ere they receiv'd their ſight,
Saw more than I, and hail'd him LORD and CHRIST.
Who ſhall believe when I renounce belief?
The very dev'ils own Him whom I denied.
Can I call theſe accurſt, whoſe impious cry
Dooms him to death; who ſmite him with their palms
Blaſpheming? Harder than their hands my heart.
Wretch, 'twas my falſe tongue train'd them on to murder;
On me, me only all their ſin rebounds:
I ſtand condemn'd, they free. Can I forget
How oft my lips confeſs'd him Son of God?
Periſh that tongue, which could revoke it's faith,
Diſown confeſſion and belie my heart.
Denied of me on earth, when in the clouds
Of heav'n he comes at the right hand of Pow'r,
And ſends his Angels with the trumpet's ſound
To gather his elect from the four winds,
When, as a ſhepherd culling out his flock,
To ſeparate all nations and divide
The good from evil he proceeds, Ah! then,
Then will he not retort the fatal words
Firſt us'd of me, I know thee not! Depart,

Thou wicked ſervant, into outer darkneſs,
There weep and gnaſh thy teeth in fires prepar'd
For SATAN and his outcaſt crew accurſt?
Thus he all night with deep remorſe o'erwhelm'd,
Mournfully kneeling at God's temple-gate,
Bewail'd his crime and ſupplication made
For pardon; and let after-times atteſt
How full a portion of God's ſpi'rit abode
In this bleſt Penitent, when with the ſound
Of ruſhing mighty winds it was pour'd down
On him and on his fellows, thence inſtall'd
Apoſtles, and with gifted tongues inſpir'd
To ſpeak all languages and preach the Word
Of CHRIST throughout the whole converted world.
Here in this very ſpot, where now he kneels
Repentant, fill'd ere long with pow'r divine,
He bade the cripple in the name of CHRIST
Riſe up and walk: He at the word in ſight
Of all the people roſe and ſtood and walk'd
And in the temple gave loud praiſe to God.
Then let not his offence, pardon'd of God,
By man but for example's ſake be nam'd,
And once more, hail, thou renovated Saint!
Made brighter by repentance: Enter thou
Into thy Maſter's joy once more; reſume

Thine

Thine apoſtolic primacy, and feed,
Shepherd of CHRIST deputed, feed his flock.
Nor ſhall thy faith once faulter, nor thy zeal
Shrink from the teſt of martyrdom, reſerv'd
To glorify thy Maſter on the croſs.
Now morning from her cloudy barrier forth
Advancing crimſon'd all the flecker'd Eaſt,
As bluſhing to lead on the guilty day.
With the firſt dawn the wakeful elders meet,
Short council hold, for little time ſuffic'd
To take their voices, whoſe relentleſs minds
In the ſame bloody league were banded all;
And now unanimous with their high prieſt
In ſtately grave proceſſion forth they march
To find their heathen judge, and at his bar
Arraign the Holy One.—But check, my heart,
Thine indignation; let the verſe proceed!—
Him in his ſeat of judgment high enthron'd,
With axes and with lictors round embay'd
In martial ſtate, with reverence they ſalute,
And lowly ſtoop their tributary heads
To his vice-gerent majeſty: With ſmile
Of condeſcending favor he accepts
Their abject greeting, and to his right hand
Their chief advances; others in their ranks

And orders he diſpoſes; then with feign'd
Solicitude, as if to ſeek the cauſe
Of this concerted meeting, he begins.
What cauſe ſo weighty brings JEHOVAH'S prieſt
With theſe wiſe elders and time-honor'd ſcribes
Thus early to ſeek juſtice at my bar?
Appeal ſo reverend, with ſuch leader grac'd
And by ſuch followers witneſs'd, well demands
Of Cæſar's ſervant his moſt equal ear.
Whereto the' high prieſt, ſecond to none in craft,
With ſolemn accent and demeanor grave
Maſking his baſe colluſion, thus replies.
When he, whoſe hand the ſword of juſtice ſways,
Her balance alſo holds in equal poiſe
Over this realm provincial, we have cauſe
To thank the maſter of our liberties,
Who by ſuch delegation of his power
Makes light that yoke, which elſe would gall our necks,
Though Cæſar lays it on us: Then let praiſe
Be giv'n to Cæſar for the love we bear
To PONTIUS PILATE. Have I leave to ſay,
That we your ſervants, a peculiar race,
Pay worſhip to one God and hold at heart
As ſacred that commandment handed down
From our forefathers, which for ever makes

His

His undivided Unity the creed
Of all our nation; and whoe'er blaſphemes
His name and controverts our holy faith,
Dies by our law? This ſentence we have paſs'd,
But execution ſtaid, ſo bound in duty,
Upon a certain Nazarite, by name
JESUS, obſcure of birth, but of our peace
No ſlight diſturber; for the common herd,
A monſter as you know with many heads,
And every head with twice as many ears
Itching for novelties, have rais'd this man
To dang'rous eminence; and for he cheats
Their groſs credulity with juggling ſleights,
Which they call miracles, have blown his pride
To ſuch a monſtrous bulk, he now ſcales heaven,
There ſeats himſelf—Oh! where ſhall I find words
To ſpeak his blaſphemy?—at God's right hand,
His Son, his equal, ſharer of his throne,
Judge of the world. If this be not a crime
For death to expiate we are ſlaves indeed,
And every ſtatute, ordinance and law
Rome leaves inviolate, JESUS ſhall break
Unpuniſh'd: Nor is this, dread ſir, the whole
Of his preſumption; mark, I pray, the heighth
To which his phrenſy rages, mark his threat!

He will put down this temple in three days
And in like time with hands inviſible
Erect another.—Patron of our laws,
Fountain of juſtice! ought this man to live?
Such madneſs breath'd into our peoples minds
Will ſpur them to the deed, break every band
That ties them down to order, and turn looſe
Their fury not on us alone but Rome,
Not on our temple only but perhaps
On this tribunal, which Heav'n guard! And now
Take the whole matter of our charge at once:
This JESUS hath pronounc'd himſelf a king,
Our king, your maſter's rival: You beſt know
If your great empe'ror abdicates his right
To our allegiance, which we fain would hold,
Where we have vow'd it, to imperial Cæſar,
Not to this mean mechanic, Joſeph's ſon.
This is our plea, O PONTIUS, why we claim
Juſtice againſt the pris'ner, who now waits
Your ſentence under guard and bound, as fits
Delinquent ſo atrocious: I have ſaid.
To him the Roman—Be it known to all,
The ſentence, which you urge againſt the life
Of your now abſent pris'ner, cannot paſs
By practice of our law, till face to face

With

With his accuſers he ſhall ſtand at bar,
And licence have to anſwer for himſelf
Touching the crime in charge; therefore theſe words,
Which you have largely ſpent, are ſpent in air,
Elſe might the ear of juſtice be foreſtall'd
By the empleader's charge, and ſo perchance
Let fall the axe upon the guiltleſs head.
Much knowledge of your laws I cannot boaſt,
Nor with theſe learned ſcribes hold argument;
For ſo much therefore as to them pertains
I on the part of Cæſar am no judge;
His tributes, his ſupremacy and rights
Diſputed or oppos'd I ſhall uphold
'Gainſt all offenders. Let th' accus'd appear!
This ſaid, behold the bleſſed Son of God
Dragg'd to a pagan bar! There whilſt he ſtood
A ſpectacle of pity, patient, meek,
Submitted to his fate, PILATE, who knew
Him innocent and his accuſers falſe,
Envious and cruel, ey'd him o'er and o'er,
And as he ponder'd in his mind how baſe
The ſentence he was now requir'd to give,
Some ſparks of Roman virtue, not quite dead
Though faintly felt in his degene'rate breaſt,
Revolted from the deed: Soft was the touch,

Though

Though ineffectual, which ſweet pity gave
To his ſtern heart: He wiſh'd, yet knew not how,
To' unfold the gates of mercy, and through them
Let paſs the reſcued Innocent to life;
The ſon of Epicurus could no more.
Upon the Sufferer's brow ſerene he ſaw
Where innocence and ſanctity enthron'd
Sate viſible and claim'd his juſt award:
He turn'd him to th' accuſers and beheld
Such malice, as brought up to view a groupe
Of his own furies from their fabled hell;
Then with a frown he cries—What law is your's,
Which makes this man a culprit ere he's tried?
Unmanacle his limbs! A Roman judge
Hears no man plead in ſhackles; he, who ſpeaks
In life's defence hath call for every aid
That Nature can beſtow, free uſe of limbs,
Action and utterance to grace his cauſe,
And hold him up againſt the world's contempt:
I will not hear a man that pleads in bonds.
Cut thoſe vile cords aſunder: Set him looſe!
And now our bleſſed Lord, his arms releas'd
From the harſh thongs, which the malignant Jews
Had bound about them, 'gan to re-compoſe
His decent veſture and with calm ſurvey

To note his perſecutors, thoſe dire prieſts
And cruel hypocrites that bay'd him round.
In every breaſt tranſparent to his eye
Malice and craft and envy he diſcern'd:
In PILATE's face the ſhifting hues beſpoke
Internal ſtrife of paſſions all in arms,
Combat 'twixt good and evil: In his hand
He held a ſcroll, which with intentive eye
And thoughtful brow deep pondering he perus'd:
The writing well he knew, but the contents,
Thus worded, much perplex'd his wav'ring thoughts.
" O Pilate, if thy wife was ever held
" In honor, love or truſt, I do adjure thee
" This once take warning from her voice inſpir'd
" To ſnatch thee from deſtruction. Oh! withhold
" Thine hand from that juſt perſon, harm not him,
" That holy JESUS, who now ſtands before thee;
" Touch not his ſacred life, or on thine head
" A fearful judgment thou ſhalt elſe pull down:
" A mighty Pow'r protects him, what I know not,
" But mightier ſure than all the Gods of Rome;
" For I have ſeen his glory in a dream,
" And dreams deſcend from heav'n. Pilate, beware!"
Such was the warning ſcroll he now perus'd,
Ev'n on the judgment ſeat, by timely hand

Sent for his reſcue: Happy! had he turn'd
His heart ſo warn'd to juſtice, and obey'd
The viſitation of the ſpi'rit vouchſaf'd:
But he, like Cæſar, deem'd his manhood pledg'd
To make ſlight 'count of a weak woman's dream:
Yet much confus'd, uncertain and perplex'd
He look'd around, and ſaw all eyes upon him:
The Jews impatient, JESUS at the bar
Prepar'd for trial: What ſhall he reſolve?
Break up the court and judgment put aſide
For a mere vapor, for no better plea
Than to indulge a woman's fond caprice,
And bid the law ſtand ſtill and wait the time
"Till PILATE'S wife ſhall meet with better dreams?"—
Such ſcorn he dar'd not to provoke, and now
Loud murmurs fill'd his ear: Compell'd to riſe,
Though uncollected and in mind diſturb'd,
He thus addreſs'd the LORD.—Art thou a king,
And of this nation, who accuſe thee to me,
King of the Jews?—Thou ſay'ſt it, JESUS cried:
But ſay'ſt thou of thyſelf this thing, or taught
Of others art thou prompted ſo to ſpeak?—
Am I a Jew? the fault'ring judge replied;
Not I, but theſe, who if thou wert a king
Were thine own ſubjects, elders, prieſts and ſcribes,

Theſe

Theſe have accus'd thee. Not of them am I;
Nor in this buſineſs covet further ſhare,
Than on the part of juſtice to demand,
What haſt thou done? How anſwer'ſt thou their charge?
Of this world were my kingdom, ſaid our LORD,
My ſervants would defend their King; and fight
To ſave me from my' oppreſſors: But I reign
Not on this earth, nor is my pow'r from hence.
Art thou a king then?—interpos'd the judge:—
Thou ſay'ſt, cried JESUS, that I am a king;
And truly to this purpoſe was I born,
And for this cauſe came I into the world,
That I ſhould witneſs bear unto the Truth;
And all, that to the Truth belong, hear me.—
What is the Truth? ſaid PILATE, but his voice
Now falter'd and his thoughts unſettled, wild
And driv'n at random like a wreck, could graſp
No helm of reaſon; only this he knew
There was no fault before him: This aloud
To all he publiſh'd and pronounc'd him clear.
Whereat with rage and diſappointment ſtung,
Furious as wolves defrauded of their prey,
Uproſe the prieſts appellant, and afreſh
Urge o'er and o'er their aggravating charge,
Forging new falſehoods and re-forging old:

The Preacher of forbearance, peace and love
Perverter of the nation now they call,
Fomenter of ſedition, ſpreading wide
From Galilee, the cradle of his birth,
Throughout all Jewry to the capital;
Where now aſſuming to himſelf the name,
Prerogative and ſtate of King and CHRIST,
He ſtirreth up the people to revolt,
Forbidding them to pay their rightful dues
Of tribute to Rome's emperor, himſelf
Exalting above Cæſar. This and more
In the like ſtrain of virulence, with lips
In aſpic venom ſteep'd they now depoſe;
Nor had they brought their malice to a pauſe,
When PILATE, hoping he had now found plea
To ſhift the dreaded ſentence from himſelf,
Thus interpoſing check'd their clam'rous ſpleen.
  Break off, and let your tongues take reſt awhile:
It is not at this bar you muſt emplead
This man, a Galilean as it ſeems;
Whom, being ſuch, it is not mine to hear
But HEROD'S: Let his ſpecial tetrarch judge
'Twixt him and you: Thither remit your ſuit.
  This ſaid, he roſe preventing all reply,
Whilſt they, though by procraſtination gall'd,

Yet

Yet of their tetrarch confident, ſubmit:
But nor with HEROD could their malice ſpeed
To it's main purpoſe: Little care had he
For all their prieſtly clamor; in his thoughts
Religion had no intereſt, truth no weight:
For prophets and for prophecies no ear
Had he, alike regardleſs how CHRIST preach'd,
Or they complain'd; yet much he wiſh'd to ſee
Some ſplendid miracle of him perform'd,
Something to ſtrike his ſenſes with ſurprize
And ſatisfy a wanton curioſity,
Made eager by the fame of thoſe great works,
Whereof he much had heard and nothing ſeen.
But when our LORD to all his queſtions mute
Nor word nor ſign vouchſaf'd, to wrath impell'd,
What by enticements he had fail'd to gain
By taunts he hop'd to' extort; and now his ſpleen
To impious ſcorn and mockery gave the rein:
Forthwith his Pris'ner in a gorgeous robe
Apparel'd as a king, to all his court
Held up for ſport and laughter, he expos'd.
Loud was the roar of blaſphemy the whilſt,
And wild the revels of the ſcoffing throng
As the lewd orgies of the frantic god,
Or clamor of that ſacrilegious rout,

When their mad rage the Thracian minſtrel tore,
Whoſe wonder-working harp could charm the ear
Of hell and call dead nature into life.
The prieſts look'd on and grinn'd malicious joy;
Yet would not HEROD execution doom;
Or willing to appeaſe the jealouſy
Of PILATE, or content to mark his ſcorn
Of JESUS by this arrogant diſplay
Of mercy, as not dreading whom he ſpar'd.
Now once again at PILATE's bar he ſtands,
Not as before like malefactor tied
And round begirt with cords, but overlaid
With a rich load of ſumptuous mockery;
A lamb compell'd to carry the proud ſpoils
And guilty trappings of the ty'rannous wolf.
Again the judge with ſlow unwilling ſtep
To his tribunal mounts and thus he ſpeaks.
You ſtill perſiſt to bring this man to me
As a perverter of your nation's faith
And loyalty: Your witneſſes I've heard,
Ponder'd their depoſitions and throughout
Examin'd ev'ry tittle of your charge:
Him too I've queſtion'd in the ears of all
Here preſent, and no ſhadow of offence
Can I diſcern to warrant your appeal

For execution, and paſs judgment on him:
No, nor yet HEROD, for to him I ſent
You and your priſ'ner, and behold him freed,
Nothing is done unto him worthy death:
I will chaſtiſe him therefore and releaſe;
Yet this chaſtiſement rather to allay
Your anger, than ſo merited of him,
I ſhall inflict. Remember this your feaſt
Hath the long plea of cuſtom to be mark'd
With pardon and forbearance: To reprieve
One culprit from his ſentence I am bound
No leſs by inclination than by rule
And uſage immemorial: Make your choice!
But let it fall on innocence not guilt.
Inſtant all voices echo'd forth a cry—
Hence with this man! away with him to death!
Give us the murd'rer, ſet Barabbas free:
Let JESUS periſh!—Wherefore; for what crime?
PILATE exclaim'd: What evil hath he done?
No cauſe of death in JESUS can I find,
Be witneſs for me, juſtice, none in him;
But for that wretch, on whom ye would beſtow
Pardon miſplac'd, ſo various are his crimes,
So black their quality, ye cannot name
A death more terrible than he deſerves.

Take of the guiltleſs blood what ſtripes can draw
To ſatisfy your longing, but forbear
To take the life, if not for pity's ſake,
In honor of yourſelves, that ye may ſay,
There was one prophet, whom ye did not kill.
Loud as the winds that laſh the raging ſeas
And all as deaf, redoubling now the roar,
Th' infuriate Jews rend their blaſpheming throats,
Howling for blood; 'till deafen'd with the din
Of, Crucify him! crucify him! dreadful cry,
PILATE, who 'twixt their tumult and the death
Of that juſt Perſon ſaw no middle courſe,
By which t' eſcape, one ſolemn act prepar'd,
By expiatory waſhing of his hands
In preſence of the multitude, to purge
His ſoul, and thereof God alone is judge,
From the pure blood of that devoted Lamb.
Behold! he cries, I pour this water forth,
And therein make ablution of my ſoul
From all participation in your crime,
By waſhing of my hands from every ſtain
Of this inhuman ſacrifice, each ſpot
And ſprinkling of this guiltleſs Victim's blood.
Reſt on your heads the murder! I am clean.
This ſaid, he turn'd and fix'd a pitying look

Upon the LORD; then ſigh'd and gave the word:
Eager as hounds, when ſlipp'd upon their prey,
In ruſh the throng, and ſoon the hiſſing ſcourge
Whirl'd with impetuous ſwing aloud reſounds
Gaſhing that ſacred fleſh, whoſe bleeding ſtripes
Heal'd our ſin-wounded ſouls; upon his brow
A thorny crown they fix, whoſe tortu'ring ſpikes,
Thruſt rudely in by ſacrilegious hands,
Furrow his temples and with crimſon ſtreams
Cover his face divine: Him thus abus'd,
Mangled with ſtripes and all o'er bath'd in blood,
In purple robe they ſcornfully array
And drag to public view.—Behold the man!—
PILATE proclaim'd with horror in his voice
And out-ſtretch'd arm, that pointed to a ſight,
Which had to pity mov'd their ſteely hearts,
Had they not been of metal forg'd by fiends
And temper'd in the ſterneſt fires of hell.
Dry-ey'd, as rock of adamant unmov'd,
Obdurate to his ſorrows they look'd on,
Nor from their crucifying clamor ceas'd,
Till PILATE, now all hope for JESUS loſt,
Yielding to their tumultuous fury, cried.
Take him and do your bloody work yourſelves:
Impoſe it not on me; I find no cauſe

Of death, no fault in JESUS. Take ye him
And crucify him! Of his guiltleſs blood
Lo! I am innocent; ſee ye to that!
On us and on our children be his blood!—
Then anſwer'd all the Jews. Tremendous words,
Tremendouſly fulfill'd! And now afreſh
They clamor for the croſs; when thus the judge—
Would you that I ſhould crucify your king?—
We have no king but Cæſar, they rejoin,
Nor art thou Cæſar's friend to ſpare this man.—
'Twas paſt; to that dread name the Roman bow'd
Obedient, and from his ſad heart ſigh'd forth
Th' extorted doom—Death to the LORD OF LIFE!

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

Judas Iſcariot ſeized with remorſe returns the thirty pieces of ſilver to the prieſts and departs: Mammon reaſſumes the habit of a Levite, and meeting Judas after he had returned the money to the prieſts, inſtigates him to deſtroy himſelf. That evil ſpirit now takes wing and repairs to the wilderneſs, convenes the dæmons from all parts of Paleſtine, and informing them of Satan's expulſion from earth, warns them by his command to betake themſelves to flight before the hour of Chriſt's crucifixion: This is no ſooner announced than the whole infernal hoſt breaks up in diſorder and diſperſes to various parts of the world therein deſcribed.—The ſubject of the Crucifixion is now brought forward: The proceſſion ſets out for Mount Calvary; Chriſt bearing his croſs is bewailed by the ſpectators as he paſſes: He is ſeen by Gabriel and the angels with him from the mount, on which they were ſtationed: He addreſſes himſelf to the daughters of Jeruſalem: The executioners nail his hands and feet to the croſs; the prieſts revile him and call upon him to come down; one of the malefactors crucified with him caſts the ſame in his teeth; he is reproved by the other, whoſe penitence is rewarded by the promiſe of immediate ſalvation and glory: Chriſt from the croſs recommends his mother to John the beloved diſciple: Chriſt dies: The ſun is darkened, the earth quakes, the rocks are rent, and the bodies of the ſaints and prophets are raiſed from the dead and appear upon earth: The prieſts and elders, alarmed by theſe prodigies, reſort to Pilate and demand a guard of Romans to defend the ſepulchre, leſt the diſciples ſhould take away the body of Chriſt and pretend that he was riſen: Pilate replies, that they have a watch; bids them ſee to it themſelves and diſmiſſes them.

CALVARY.

BOOK VI.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

"ON us and on our children be his blood!"—
Such was your imprecation, O ye Jews,
When in your ſight the world's Redeemer ſtood
Gaſh'd o'er with wounds, and emptying ev'ry vein
For man's redemption; and behold! it flows,
It whelms upon you in a flood-gate tide;
Steep'd to the lips ye are in all the blood
Of all the righteous ſhed upon the earth,
From blood of righteous Abel to the blood
Of Zechariah, whom your fathers ſton'd
Betwixt the altar and the houſe of God.
Ye have enough; the mark is on your race;
Ye have drawn down the judgment ye provok'd,
It reſts upon you: Yet for you no reſt,
No ſtation, no abiding-place is found;

Strangers and weary wand'rers upon earth,
If in the duſt of your Jeruſalem
With foot proſcrib'd ye dare to tread, ye die;
A ſavage race uſurps your ſacred mount,
And Jordan echoes an unhallow'd name;
Should ye but ſtop to ſhed a filial tear
Upon the ſoil where your forefathers ſleep,
Woe to the circumcis'd that ſo is found!
Oh! ſlow of heart, when will ye underſtand,
That thus afflicted, ſcatter'd and diſpers'd
Through every clime and kingdom of the world
Ye are ſent forth to publiſh, as ye paſs,
How truly CHRIST predicted of your fate;
And though your lips deny, your ſufferings prove
That prophet JESUS, whom your fathers ſlew,
Was Savior, Chriſt, Meſſias, Son of God.
  Amidſt the throng that fill'd the judgment-hall
Stood JUDAS; he upon the watch to' avoid
The Maſter's eye with caution took his poſt;
Yet was his ear to all that JESUS ſpake
Still preſent, and, though few the words, yet ſtrong
And potent of thoſe few the' impreſſive truth.
There was a magic ſweetneſs in his voice,
A note that ſeem'd to ſhiver every nerve
Entwin'd about his heart, though now corrupt,

Debas'd and harden'd. Ill could he abide,
Murderer although he were, the dying tones
Of him, whom he had murder'd: 'Twas the voice
As of a ſpirit in the air by night
Heard in the meditation of ſome crime,
Or ſleep-created in the troubled ear
Of conſcience, crying out, Beware! It ſmote
Upon the ſoul, for it was CHRIST who ſpake,
Well then might JUDAS tremble; 'twas the traitor
Liſtning the plea of innocence betray'd,
Well might that plea awaken his remorſe.
When the perverting witneſſes depos'd
To crimes, of which he knew his Maſter free,
The refutation quiver'd on his lips,
And hard he ſtruggled to bring forth the words,
Yet could not, tongue-ty'd with deſpair and ſhame.
But if his hearing ſo alarm'd his heart,
What were his feelings, when at times his eye
Glanc'd on the ſacred perſon of his Lord,
Bound like a felon, his defenceleſs hands
In manacles confin'd behind his back,
His cheeks with blows ſufflated, and his face,
Oh, piteous! with blaſpheming ſlaver ſtain'd;
Then ſtripp'd, transform'd, in purple ſtole array'd,
Saluted with the inſolent All-hail,

King of the Jews! a ſpectacle of ſport
And merriment to all the ſcoffing crowd?
Could heart of man bear this, who had beheld
His miracles, his mercies; prov'd his love,
His patience, his forbearance; ſhar'd his cares,
His labors and his watchings; heard his voice,
When tempeſt-toſt, rebuke the elements,
Though ſilent now amidſt the roar of tongues?
'Twas all that prieſtly malice could inflict,
But more than MAMMON'S convert could ſupport.
Yet worſe had theſe tormentors in reſerve
To agonize his ſoul, another ſcene
To ſhift new horrors on that bloody ſtage:
The torturing ſcourge now ſounded in his ears,
The mangled fleſh flew off in tatter'd ſtripes,
The crimſon ſtream ran down, the pavement drank
Libation of his immolated blood:
The hall rebellow'd with the echoing cry
Of monſters, who applauded every ſtroke,
Wolves, vultures, Oh, for words to ſpeak them worſe!
Men turn'd to dæmons. Traitor though he were,
Son of perdition, this was all too much.
Take hence, he cried, take back your bribe accurſt,
Damn'd price of damning deed! Tell o'er your coin;
Count out your thirty pieces, for each piece

Is thirty thouſand daggers to my heart:
Burthen'd too much already with my ſins,
I ſhould but into worſe damnation ſink
Under this mercenary load oppreſt.
I have betray'd the innocent; too late
For pardon, I am paſt redemption loſt;
Ye may redeem the time, if ye recall
Your fatal condemnation and atone
To that juſt perſon ye have doom'd to death;
If not, ye crucify the Lord of Life.
This ſaid, he threw the thirty pieces down
And ſtrait departed; they to his retort
Short anſwer made remorſeleſs and malign.
And now diſburthen'd of his filthy bribe,
It ſeem'd as though his conſcience would permit
A momentary pauſe for one ſhort gleam
Of hope to viſit his benighted ſoul:
'Twas ſomething like atonement, 'twas one ſtep
Turn'd backward from the precipice of ſin
And pointed tow'rds repentance; 'twas the laſt
Faint effort that reluctant nature made
To ſtruggle 'gainſt ſelf-murder; but how vain!
For MAMMON, once the tyrant of man's heart,
Ill brooks expulſion thence, from youth to age,
From age to life's extremeſt hour he holds

Abſolute empire, nor does hell contain
Spirit ſo jealous of uſurp'd command.
He in the boſoms of thoſe impious prieſts
Held high pre-eminence, and them amidſt,
Himſelf unſeen, had noted all that paſs'd;
And much indignant to be now abjur'd
Of that compunctious traitor, ſwift as thought,
Such was his power of motion, took the form
And habit of that Levite firſt aſſum'd,
And him cloſe following to the outward hall,
There with theſe taunting words aſſail'd his ear.
A loſing game, friend JUDAS, thou haſt play'd
To ſet thy ſoul upon a deſperate caſt,
And after pay the ſtake on either ſide.
What folly is it to be knave by halves!
Who would ſtrike virtue in the face, and then
Aſk pardon for the blow; fall off from truth,
Enliſt with falſehood and take pay for treaſon,
Then by a paltry plea of reſtitution
Think to compound one treſpaſs by another,
Deſertion by deſertion? Get thee hence,
Thou ſhame to manhood! wring out the ſad dregs
Of thy deteſted life in hopeleſs tears,
For thou haſt thrown away both worlds at once;
All gain in this, all glory in the next.

And what art thou, cried JUDAS, ſo to gall
A wounded ſpirit, wounded by thy arts,
Tempter accurſt? Human thou canſt not be,
Elſe thou wouldſt find ſome pity in thy heart
For wretch like me. Who but thyſelf ſeduc'd
My loyalty from CHRIST? Who ſapp'd my faith?
Who fix'd this adder to my breaſt but thou?
Thou, dæmon as thou art, haſt hurl'd me down
From my high hope to fathomleſs abyſs
Of miſery and deſpair, from heav'n to hell.

Rail not on me, quoth MAMMON, but thyſelf
And thine own folly; there the charge were juſt.
Didſt thou not ſell thy Maſter for a bribe?
My part was faithfully perform'd; the price
Condition'd for was paid. What wouldſt thou more?
I needed treaſon, and I ſought out thee
As fitteſt for my purpoſe; Envious, proud,
Luſtful of pelf, a villain ready-made
And ripe for miſchief, ſuch I mark'd thee down;
Nay, and yet better; for I thought thee whole
And perfect villain with no rotten part
Of penitence to mar thee; but, behold,
Thou haſt deceiv'd me vilely, and haſt got
A blinking vice about thee, a perverſe

And retrograde depravity of ſoul,
That makes thee hateful to my ſight: Begone!
That thou art wicked put not me to blame;
Hadſt thou been conſtant I had made thee rich,
And riches would have ſav'd thee from contempt;
Now thou art poor and loathſome. Hence; avaunt!
One remedy I'll give thee for deſpair,
This cord, a remnant of thy Maſter's bonds;
A legacy moſt opportunely left
To heal thy cares and recompence thy love:
Take, and apply it to it's proper uſe;
It tied his limbs: Let it encaſe thy throat.
He ſaid, and ſtooping, from the pavement took
The cord there left, and hurling it with ſcorn
To the deſponding traitor diſappear'd:
Nor did that wretch the fatal gift reject,
But eager ſeiz'd the inſtrument of death,
And ſoon within a darkſome vault beneath
The judgment-hall fit ſolitude he found
And beam appropriate to his deſperate uſe;
Whereto appendent he breath'd out his ſoul,
Not daring to put up one prayer for peace
At his dark journey's end; but trembling, wild,
Confus'd, of reaſon as of hope bereft,

With

With heaving breaſt and ghaſtly ſtaring eyes
There betwixt heav'n and earth, of both renounc'd,
Hung terrible to ſight, a bloated corpſe.
Oh! how ſhall raſh and ignorant man preſume
To judge for God, and on his narrow ſcale
Think to mete out by limits and degrees
Immeaſurable mercy? Who can tell
How high the ſorrows of man's ſuffering heart
Aſcend tow'rds heav'n, how ſwift contrition flies,
What words find paſſage to the throne of grace,
What in mid-way are loſt, diſpers'd in air
And ſcatter'd to the winds? Oh! that my harp
Could ſound that happy note, which ſtirs the ſtring
Reſponſive, that kind Nature hath entwin'd
About the human heart, and by whoſe clue
Repentance, heav'nly monitreſs, reclaims
The youthful wanderer from his dang'rous maze
To tread her peaceful paths and ſeek his God:
So could my fervent my effectual verſe
Avail, poſterity ſhould then engrave
That verſe upon my tomb to tell the world
I did not live in vain. But heedleſs man,
Deaf to the muſic of the moral ſong,
By Mammon or by Belial led from ſin
To ſin, runs onward in his mad career,

Nor once takes warning of his better guide,
Till at the barrier of life's little ſpan
Arriv'd, he ſtops: Death opens to his view
A hideous gulph; in vain he looks around
For the loſt ſeraph Hope; beſide him ſtands
The tyrant fiend and urges to the brink;
Behind him black deſpair with threat'ning frown
And gorgon ſhield, whoſe interpoſed orb
Bars all retreat, and with it's ſhade involves
Life's brighter proſpects in one hideous night.
So JUDAS fell; ſo like him every wretch,
By the ſame filthy Mammon lur'd, ſhall fall.
Meanwhile the vengeful dæmon unappeas'd,
Pond'ring the warning of his Stygian Lord
Late driv'n from earth, and mindful that the charge
And conduct of hell's hoſt on him devolv'd
Now claim'd his warieſt thought, upon the wing
Sets forth full ſail to ſummon his compeers,
As many' as in that quarter might be found,
And them apprize of their foul loſs incurr'd
By their great captain's fall, and what diſpatch
Behoves them now put forth timely to 'ſcape
Impending danger of their chief foreſeen,
If CHRIST's death-hour ſhould unawares ſurprize
Them idly ſtation'd, or with curious gaze

Hovering

Hovering about his croſs. So forth he goes:
But firſt to ſpy the land he wheels his flight
Athwart Mount Calvary, and there on guard
A file of heav'nly warriors he deſcries
Covering the ſacred hill, and at their head
GABRIEL in golden panoply array'd,
Arm'd at all points, commander of the band.
The fate of SATAN and the recent fight
Of CHEMOS' ghaſtly wound, with guilty fears
Haunting his coward fancy, warn'd him fly
Beyond the range of that ſtrong ſpear, from which
Spirit more warlike than himſelf had fled.
As when a pirate galley on the ſcout,
Roving the ſeas of ſome ſtrong-guarded coaſt,
In bay or inlet moor'd under the lea
Of headland promontory' at anchor ſpies
A warlike fleet, whoſe tow'ring maſts and ſails
Unbent for ſea beſpeak their ready trim,
Down goes the helm at once, the felon crew
Beſtir all hands and veer the veſſel round
To ſeaward, then ply oars and ſails for life:
So at the ſight of that angelic band
The Stygian ſcout wheel'd round and ſped his flight
Sheer to the wilderneſs on ſwifteſt wing.
There on the watch AZAZEL haply found

He bade ſound forth the loud Satanic trump,
Heard through all Paleſtine, at call whereof
Spi'rits, to whatever element affix'd,
In troops ſwift-poſting on the charmed winds,
Came from all parts; from Sidon and from Tyre
New ris'n amidſt the waves; from Gaza's coaſt,
Meridian limit, to the ſnow-capt mounts
Hermon and Libanus, and them beyond
From Epidaphne on Orontes' ſtream,
Fam'd for it's grove prophetic; from the banks
Of Pharphar and Abana, Rimmon's haunts;
From Byblus, where Aſtarte's wanton train
Howl for the death of Thammuz, yearly loſt
And found as oft by the love-frantic dames.
Theſe on the deſart heath alighting ſtand
Obedient to the ſignal; all around
Expectant of their arch-angelic chief
They caſt an anxious look, but look in vain:
Him in far other region they ſhall find
In chains faſt bound amidſt eternal fires,
His diſmal dwelling, for them alſo' reſerv'd
In God's appointed time. To whom the fiend.
I muſe not, warriors, that ye ſtand amaz'd
To ſee yourſelves in abſence of our chief
Here ſummon'd by his arch-angelic trump,

Which other breath than his before ne'er fill'd;
But public danger urges this bold ſtep,
In me preſumptuous, had I not to plead
Your ſafety for my warrant, and withal
His laſt ſad mandate earneſtly bequeath'd
At parting, when ſole witneſs I beheld
His utter loſs, diſcomfiture and flight.
Ah, friends! how ſympathetic with my ſoul
Is that deep general groan, which now I hear!
Full cauſe, immortal mourners, have we all
To groan and beat our breaſts, nor I the leaſt,
Whoſe melancholy taſk it is to pour
Theſe heavy tidings in your grieved ears.
But let us yet remember what we are,
And be not therefore heartleſs, though bereft
Of him, who was the head and brain of all.
Many and mighty are the chiefs yet left,
Though he prime chief no longer ſhall review
This widow'd hoſt. Of SATAN the return
Is deſp'rate, ſuch a whirlwind caught him up,
So ſtrong a ſouthern blaſt at CHRIST's command
Blew him beyond the ſtretch of angel ken
Right onward to the realm of antient Night
Impetuous through the empyrean void
Sheer on the level wing. Of him the fate

Is worſe than doubtful; of his Victor's power
And Godhead irreſiſtible what proof
Greater than this ſad downfall can we need,
Or after ſuch example what provoke?
Behoves us now prepare for inſtant flight;
This our late chief, prophetic in his fall,
With his laſt words enjoin'd me to propound
To theſe our legions ſcatter'd o'er the coaſts
Of Paleſtine, whom elſe the coming hour
Of CHRIST's myſterious paſſion ſhall involve
In like diſgrace and ruin with your prince,
Who to his lateſt moment upon earth
Was ſtudious of your ſafety. I have now
In words unworthy of my charge, yet ſuch
As heart o'erwhelm'd with ſorrow can ſupply,
Surrender'd to your ears my painful truſt.
But whither to repair, whom to elect
As captain and conductor of this hoſt,
Now headleſs, conſcious that ſuch high command
With none but with the worthieſt ſhould be lodg'd,
I, as becomes me, to your wiſer thoughts
Submit, and with the general choice ſhall cloſe.

No more, for now with ſudden panic ſeiz'd,
The Stygian hoſt, no voice imperial heard
Nor rule nor order kept, uproſe at once

Diſbanded,

Diſbanded, lawleſs; dreadful was the yell
Of that infernal rout, a ſwarm as thick
As locuſts, making horrid night beneath
Their wings, that with like clangor beat the air,
As of a flock of cormorants diſturb'd
From ſome lone iſland on the rocky coaſt
Of Chili, where they haunt; ſo they with cry
More hideous mount, there hover for a while,
Then to all points diſperſe, as chance falls out,
Or ſhort conſult preſcribes. Some to the South
With Iſis and Oſiris at their head
To Memphis, Thin and Tamis take their flight;
There with the beſtial deities to herd,
Birds, ſerpents, reptiles, monſters of the Nile,
Gods that would half unfurniſh Noah's ark:
Some with Melcartus, demi-god of Tyre,
Light ſhort, and in his temple refuge take,
Where arm'd with maſſy club and lion hide
His huge athletic idol frowning ſtands:
Others with Rimmon eaſtward wing their way
To fam'd Damaſcus; there in bow'ring ſhades
By rilling fountains on the flowery turf
To doze away the ſoft oblivious hours,
A ſlumb'ring ſynod: Some the golden ſpires
Of Nineveh attract and Niſroc's fane,

Stain'd with Sennacherib's imperial blood,
There by the parricidal princes ſhed:
To Byblus and Belitus others ſpeed,
Light feathery wantons by Aſtarte led
With looſe love-ditties and ſoft ſmiles lur'd on
To page her pride and deck her amorous ſports:
But of the reſt far greater part repair
To high Olympus, where preſides the power
Of thundering Baäl; he that ſtation keeps
Pre-eminent o'er all the idol gods,
And in his feſtive hall rich nectar quaffs
With purple lips, and midnight revels holds
Luxurious, ſenſual, lewd, in vice immers'd:
Yet ſome there were and of no vulgar note,
Who, grief to tell! to the biforked mount
Flew off, and there with the Parnaſſian maids
Held ſhameful dalliance, from whoſe lewd embrace
Deſcended a whole family of bards
Corruptive, illegitimate and baſe;
A ſpurious breed of wickedneſs and wit;
A Muſe's genius with a Dæmon's heart:
MAMMON meanwhile, a ſolitary ſprite,
Selfiſh, moroſe and ev'n by dev'ils abhorr'd,
Hied him alone, on ſordid thoughts intent,
To rummage in Pactolus' ſands for gold;

None

None join'd, nor ſought he partner in his flight,
His ſole ambition to engroſs and hoard.
Now came the awful conſummation on,
The hour of promiſe, dimly ſhadow'd out
By types and prophecies, when from the womb
Of myſtery, long travailing in pains
And groanings, now in ripe time ſhould ſpring forth
Her full form'd revelation to diſpel
Th' Obſcure of antient days and uſher in
Twin birth of Immortality and Life.
Now God by the' off'ring of his only Son
The type of Abraham's ſacrifice fulfill'd,
Who, though unconſcious of that type, by faith
Righteous, was of the promiſes made heir.
And now, as Moſes in the wilderneſs
Lifted the ſerpent, ſo the Son of man
Exalted on the croſs ſhall heal the world
Of ſin, and expiate the wide-waſting plague.
Now the peace-offering of the ſpotleſs Lamb
By one concluſive Paſſover ſhall rend
The law's ſymbolic veil, and all abſolve,
Whoſe conſciences are ſprinkled with his blood,
From puniſhment entail'd upon the world
By man's firſt diſobedience. Forth He comes

From condemnation: Ye too from your tombs
Come forth, ye prophets!—Son of Amoz, thou
Prepare for reſurrection: Come and ſee,
Not darkly' as in a glaſs, but face to face,
The object of thy viſion; Him, the man
Of ſorrows; Him, who like a lamb is brought
To ſlaughter: Mark the travail of his ſoul;
Witneſs how he is ſtricken for our ſins,
Witneſs how we are healed by his ſtripes,
And by the note and comment of his death
Conſtrue thine own predictions. Forth he comes
From condemnation under Roman guard,
Bearing his croſs: Upon his bleeding brow,
Enſign alike of royalty and woe,
A thorny crown; no friendly hand is found
To wipe away the tear mingled with blood,
That hangs upon his cheek: The ſoldiers cry,
Room for the criminal! and reſt their pikes
To keep the crowd aloof; ſtaggering beneath
The ponderous burthen of his croſs he faints
And ſinks to earth o'erſpent, till one is found,
A ſturdy ſtranger of Cyrenean birth,
On whom to lay the venerable load.
Hail, SIMON! bleſſed above men wert thou,
If faith in Him that ſuffer'd on that croſs

Glow'd

Glow'd in thy heart and furniſh'd thee with zeal
To render this laſt ſervice to thy Lord.
Without the city walls there was a mount
Call'd CALVARY: The common grave it was
Of malefactors; there to plant his croſs
It was decreed: Long was the way to death,
And like th' aſcent to glory hard to climb.
Upon the ſummit ſtood the Angel troop
Of MAMMON ſeen, though to man's filmed eye
Inviſible: Here GABRIEL from the heighth
Noting the ſad proceſſion, had eſpied
The ſuffering Son of God amidſt the throng
Dragg'd ſlowly on by rude and ruffian hands
To ſhameful execution: Horror-ſtruck,
Pierc'd to the heart th' indignant Seraph ſhook
His threat'ning ſpear, and with the other hand
Smote on his thigh in agony of ſoul
For man's ingratitude; gliſt'ning with tears
His eyes, whence late celeſtial ſweetneſs beam'd,
Now ſhot a fiery glance on them below,
Then, raiſing them to heav'n, he thus exclaim'd.
Oh! that the Everlaſting would permit
His Angels to chaſtiſe theſe impious men,
And from their hands his holy Son redeem,
Whom in the heav'n of heav'ns we have beheld

Beloved

Beloved of the Father, ever bleſt,
At the right hand of Pow'r in glory thron'd!
But this for purpoſes beyond our reach
God ever wiſe forbids, and who againſt
God's interdict ſhall ſtir? Therefore retire,
Stand off and wait the time! If CHRIST commands,
We are his miniſters to do his will,
Be it to lift this mountain from it's baſe
And whelm it on his murderers; if not,
Patient ſpectators we muſt here abide
And let the ſacrilegious work proceed;
Knowing that God hath ſaid, I will revenge:
Vengeance belongeth to the Lord alone.
Now on the news of their great Prophet's fate
Each heart with fearfulneſs and trembling ſeiz'd,
Through all Jeruſalem the tumult ran;
Native or ſtranger, aged or infirm,
None in the Holy City now kept houſe:
Where'er the Savior paſs'd his preſence drew
Thouſands to gaze; and many' an aching heart
Heav'd ſilent the laſt tributary ſigh
In memory of his mercies; zealous ſome
Ruſh'd in the grateful bleſſing to beſtow
For health or limbs or life itſelf reſtor'd:
But theſe the ſoldiers rudely thruſt aſide,

And ſome with brutal violence they ſmote,
Thick'ning their files to hem their Pris'ner cloſe,
As fearful of a reſcue. Loud the cry
Of women, whoſe ſoft ſex to pity prone
Melts at thoſe ſcenes, which flinty-hearted man
Dry-ey'd contemplates: Mothers in their arms
Held up their infants, and with ſhrill acclaim
Begg'd a laſt bleſſing for thoſe innocents,
Whoſe ſweet ſimplicity ſo well he lov'd,
And ever as he met them laid his hands
Upon their harmleſs heads with gentle love
And gracious benediction, breathing heav'n
Into their hearts. Oh! happy babes, ſo bleſt!
Fenc'd in with ſhields and ſpears and compaſs'd round
With Roman guards the perſecuting prieſts,
Elders and ſcribes follow'd their Victim's ſteps
Amidſt the ſcoffs and hiſſings of the crowd;
And ſtill as CHRIST approach'd the fatal ſpot
Loud and more loud the ſad lamentings grew,
Till at the foot of the funereal mount
Arriv'd he ſtopt, and, turning to the group
Of mourners, theſe prophetic words addreſs'd.
Daughters of Solyma, weep not for me,
Weep rather for yourſelves and for your babes;
For lo! the dawn of ſorrows is at hand;

The

The dread prediction preſſes to the birth,
When through Jeruſalem a voice ſhall cry—
Give thanks, ye childleſs matrons, and confeſs
A barren bed, your worſt misfortune deem'd,
Now your beſt bleſſing: Break forth into joy,
Ye, at whoſe breaſts no infant ever hung,
For ye have none to mourn. Now to the clefts
And caverns of the mountains they ſhall ſay,
Fall on us, cover us, ye rocky vaults,
And hide us from this wrath! For if with us
Already it begins, what ſhall the end
Of the ungodly and the ſinner be?
If the green tree cannot abide the ſtorm,
How ſhall the dry eſcape?—And now no more:
Upon the ſummit of Mount CALVARY
They rear his croſs; conſpicuous there it ſtands
An enſign of ſalvation to the world.
Kneel, all ye Chriſtian nations! bow your hearts
And worſhip your Redeemer, in whoſe death
Ye live, and from whoſe iſſuing wounds flows life,
By his blood purchas'd; hope's beſt promiſe flows
Of joys immortal for the juſt reſerv'd.
The ſoldiers, now by their centurion form'd
In hollow orb around the croſs, begin
Their horrid prelude to the murd'rous ſcene;

And firſt his veſture, their accuſtom'd ſpoil
And perquiſite, they part; but for his coat
From top to bottom woven without ſeam,
That they rend not, but on it caſt their lots
Whoſe it ſhall be entire. Upon his croſs
In Hebrew, Greek and Latin they inſcribe,
So PILATE will'd though by the prieſts oppos'd,
"JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS!"
This title, in three ſeveral tongues diſplay'd,
Read all thoſe crucifiers of their King
And murmur'd as they read; hard to the laſt,
Obdurate, unbelieving. Now began
The executioners to ſpread his arms
Upon the beam tranſverſe, and through his palms,
Monſters of cruelty! and through his feet
They drove their ſpiked nails; whilſt at the clang
Of thoſe dire engines every feeling heart
Utter'd a groan, that with the mingled ſhrieks
Of mothers and of children pierc'd the air.
The prieſts and elders gnaſh'd their teeth for rage
And rancorous ſpite to hear him ſo bewail'd:
Women dropt down convuls'd and on the ſpot
Let fall their burthens immature for birth.
Words fail to paint the horrors of that ſcene:
The very ſoldiers paus'd and ſtood aghaſt,

Muſing what theſe lamentings might portend;
Scarce dar'd they to purſue the dreadful work
Awe-ſtruck and gazing on the face divine
Of the ſuſpended Savior. He, though ſtretch'd
Upon the rack of agony, to heav'n
Raiſing his eyes—Father of mercy, cried,
Forgive them, for they know not what they do!
O ruthleſs murderers! could ye hear theſe words
And yet perſiſt? Blaſphemers! can ye read
And not adore? The people ſtand at gaze;
The rulers eager to provoke anew
Their quailing reſolution with one voice
Cry out amain—Ah! thou, that on the croſs
Now hangeſt, thou, that boaſtedſt to deſtroy
Our temple and rebuild it in three days,
Where art thou? If thou be the very CHRIST,
The King of Iſrael, now come down, deſcend
And ſave thyſelf; this ſeeing, we will then
Confeſs thee and believe. But 'tis in vain;
He hears not, he replies not, he expires:
Others he ſav'd; himſelf he cannot ſave.
Peace, peace, revilers! nor expect reply:
Think not that CHRIST, thus dying for mankind,
Will from his great commiſſion turn aſide
And ſtop the ſacrifice and quit the croſs,

On

On which his body offer'd up for ſin
As on an altar lies. Your taunts he hears;
Yet will he not deſcend call'd down by you,
Nor at the door of death ſhrink back and leave
Short of perfection his all-glorious work.
But wait the time and greater ſign than this
Ye ſhall behold, when riſing from the dead
And incorruptible he ſhall return
On earth triumphant o'er the croſs and death.
Yet, ſuch is the perverſeneſs of your hearts,
Him nor deſcending would ye now believe,
Nor re-aſcending will ye then confeſs.
And now behold! on either ſide the croſs
Of CHRIST a wretched malefactor hung
Groaning and writhing in the pangs of death:
When one of theſe, encourag'd by the taunts
Of the reviling prieſts, ſcornful exclaims—
Hear'ſt thou not what they ſay? If thou be CHRIST,
Why art thou in this torture? Save thyſelf,
And us thy fellows from this croſs redeem—
This when his penitent companion heard,
New horrors ſmote his heart, his fault'ring voice
He rais'd and thus the blaſphemy rebuk'd.
Haſt thou no fear of God, expiring wretch?
Stretch'd as thou art upon the tree of death,

Haſt thou no terror for the wrath to come?
And truly we the merited reward
Of our ill deeds receive, but this juſt Man,
What hath he done? In him no fault is found.
This ſaid, the penitent with faith inſpir'd
Upon the Savior turn'd his dying eyes,
And—Lord! he cried with ſupplicating voice,
When to thy heav'nly kingdom thou ſhalt come,
Oh then remember me!—To him the LORD—
I tell thee of a truth this very day
Thou ſhalt be found in Paradiſe with me.
Oh! words of joy, that breathe into the ear
Of the expiring penitent the pledge
Of pardon and acceptance: Words, that waft
The ſoul yet hovering on the lips of faith
Into the heav'n of heav'ns, with grateful heart
We hail the glorious promiſe, which unfolds
The gates of bliſs and preſent entrance gives
To the repentant ſinner. Now no more
Conjecture ponders on the life to come;
Our dying Savior draws aſide the veil,
Through which dim reaſon caught a doubtful glimpſe
Of ſhadowy realms, that ſtretch'd beyond the grave,
Elyſian ſcenes in clouds and miſt involv'd.
Yet with this comfort take the caution too;

For

For who ſhall ſay what penitence was his,
That earn'd this promiſe? Fatally he errs,
Whoſe hope fore-runs repentance, who preſumes
That God will pardon when he's tir'd of ſin
And like a ſtale companion caſts it off.
Oh! arrogant, deluſive, impious thought,
To meditate commodious truce with Heaven,
When death's ſwift arrow ſmites him unprepar'd,
And that protracted moment never comes,
Or comes too late: Turn then, preſumptuous man,
Turn to the other ſinner on the croſs,
Who died reviling, there behold thy doom!
Thou too, the Virgin Mother of our Lord,
By the angelic ſalutation hail'd
Bleſt above women, thou amidſt the group
Of ſympathiſing mourners at that hour
Waſt preſent, when th' incarnate Virtue, born
Of thine immac'ulate womb, impregn'd of Heav'n,
Hung on the croſs expiring: He from thence
On thee diſconſolate a dying look
Of tendereſt pity caſt, and at thy ſide
Noting the meek diſciple whom he lov'd,
Thus both addreſs'd—Woman, behold thy ſon;
Son, look upon thy mother!—Sacred charge,
And piouſly fulfill'd.——Now darkneſs fell

On all the region round; the ſhrowded ſun
From the impen'itent earth withdrew his light:
I thirſt!—the Savior cried, and lifting up
His eyes in agony—My God, my God!
Ah! why haſt thou forſaken me?—exclaim'd.
Yet deem him not forſaken of his God:
Beware that error: 'Twas the mortal part
Of his compounded nature breathing forth
It's laſt ſad agony, that ſo complain'd:
Doubt not that veil of ſorrow was withdrawn,
And heav'nly comfort to his ſoul vouchſaf'd,
Ere thus he cried—Father! into thy hands
My ſpirit I commend:—Then bow'd his head
And died. Now GABRIEL and his heav'nly choir
Of miniſt'ring angels hov'ring o'er the croſs
Receiv'd his ſpi'rit, at length from mortal pangs
And fleſhly pris'on ſet free, and bore it thence
Upon their wings rejoicing. Then behold
A prodigy, that to the world announc'd
A new religion and diſſolv'd the old:
The temple's ſacred vail was rent in twain
From top to bottom 'midſt th' atteſting ſhocks
Of earthquake and the rending up of graves:
Now thoſe myſterious ſymbols, heretofore
Curtain'd from vulgar eyes and holieſt deem'd

Of

Of holies, were diſplay'd to public view:
The mercy-ſeat with its cherubic wings
O'erſhadow'd and the golden ark beneath
Covering the teſtimony now through the rent
Of that diſſever'd vail firſt ſaw the light.
A world redeem'd had now no further need
Of types and emblems, dimly ſhadowing forth
An angry Deity withdrawn from ſight
And canopied in clouds: Him face to face
Now in full light reveal'd the dying breath
Of his dear Son appeas'd, and purchas'd peace
And reconcilement for offending man.
Thus the partition wall, by Moſes built,
By CHRIST was level'd, and the Gentile world
Enter'd the breach by their great Captain led
Up to the throne of grace, opening himſelf
Through his own fleſh a new and living way.
Then were the oracles of God made known
To all the nations, ſprinkled by the blood
Of JESUS and baptiz'd into his death;
So was the birth-right of the elder-born,
Heirs of the promiſe, forfeited; whilſt they,
Whom ſin had erſt in bondage held, made free
From ſin and ſervants of the living God,
Now gain'd the gift of God, eternal life.

Soon

Soon as theſe ſigns and prodigies were ſeen
Of thoſe who watch'd the croſs, conviction ſmote
Their fear-ſtruck hearts: The ſun at noon-day dark,
The earth convulſive underneath their feet,
And the firm rocks in ſhiver'd fragments rent
Rous'd them at once to tremble and believe.
Then was our Lord by heathen lips confeſs'd,
When the centurion cried—In very truth
This righteous perſon was the Son of God—
The reſt in heart aſſenting ſtood abaſh'd,
Watching in ſilence the tremendous ſcene:
The recollection of his gracious acts,
His dying pray'rs and their own impious taunts
Now roſe in ſad review; too late they wiſh'd
The deed undone and ſighing ſmote their breaſts.
Strait from God's preſence went that Angel forth,
Whoſe trumpet ſhall call up the ſleeping dead
At the laſt day, and bade the Saints ariſe
And come on earth to hail this promis'd hour,
The day-ſpring of Salvation. Forth they came
From their dark tenements, their ſhadowy forms
Made viſible as in their fleſhly ſtate,
And through the Holy City here and there
Frequent they gleam'd, by night, by day with fear
And wonder ſeen of many: Holy ſeers,

Prophets and martyrs from the grave ſet free,
And the firſt-fruits of the redeemed dead.
They, who with CHRIST transfigur'd on the mount
Were ſeen of his diſciples in a cloud
Of dazzling glory, now in form diſtinct
Mingling amidſt the public haunts of men,
Struck terror to all hearts: Ezekiel there,
The captive ſeer, to whom on Chebar's banks
The heav'ns were open'd and the fatal roll
Held forth with dire denunciations fill'd
Of lamentation, mourning and of woe,
Now falling faſt on Iſrael's wretched race:
He too was there, Hilkiah's holy ſon,
With loins cloſe girt and glowing lips of fire
By God's own finger touch'd: There might be ſeen
The youthful prophet, Belteſhazzar nam'd
Of the Chaldees, interpreter of dreams,
Knowledge of God beſtow'd, in viſions ſkill'd
And fair and learn'd and wiſe: The Baptiſt here
Girt in his hairy mantle frowning ſtalk'd,
And, pointing to his ghaſtly wound, exclaim'd—
Ye vipers! whom my warning could not move
Timely to flee from the impending wrath,
Now fallen on your heads; whom I indeed

With water, CHRIST hath now with fire baptiz'd:
Barren ye were of fruits, which I preſcrib'd
Meet for repentance, and behold! the axe
Is laid to the unprofitable root
Of every ſapleſs tree, hewn down, condemn'd
And caſt into the fire. Lo! theſe are they,
Theſe ſhadowy forms now floating in your ſight,
Theſe are the harbingers of antient days,
Who witneſs'd the Meſſias and announc'd
His coming upon earth. Mark with what ſcorn
Silent they paſs you by: Them had ye heard,
Them had ye noted with a patient mind,
Ye had not crucified the LORD OF LIFE:
He of theſe ſtones to Abraham ſhall raiſe up
Children, than you more worthy of his ſtock;
And now his winnowing fan is in his hand,
With which he'll purge his floor, and having ſtor'd
The precious grain in garners, will conſume
With fire unquenchable the refuſe chaff.
Thus the terrific Viſion in the ears
Of the aſtoniſh'd multitude declaim'd
With threat'ning voice, and wrung their conſcious hearts;
Whilſt the blaſpheming prieſts, who in their ſcorn
Triumphant ſaw the Savior of the world

Expiring on the croſs and deem'd him loſt,
Now by the reſurrection of the ſaints,
Uſher'd on earth with prodigies and ſigns,
Confounded and amaz'd, began to doubt
If yet the ſepulchre had power to keep
It's crucified Poſſeſſor ſafe in hold,
And with theſe thoughts perplex'd, maſking their fears
Under pretence of caution, they repair
To PILATE and demand a Roman guard
To watch the tomb of CHRIST, and then they add—
For we remember that Deceiver ſaid,
Whilſt he was yet alive, after three days
I will again ariſe; therefore we pray
Command the ſepulchre to be made ſure
Till the third day, leſt his diſciples come
By night and craftily remove him thence;
So the laſt error ſhall outgo the firſt.
But PILATE, whoſe unrighteous judgment ſtill
Sate heavy on his heart, had little care
For what might them befall, and to their ſuit
Briefly reply'd—Why do ye aſk of me
That cuſtody, which in yourſelves ye have?
Take your own watch and to their charge commit
The ſafeguard of that body, which, though dead,

Keeps yet alive your fears: 'Tis your own cauſe,
As ſuch I leave it with you; ſo begone!
He ſaid and turn'd aſide, nor did they tempt
Further diſcourſe, but murm'ring went their way.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

This Book opens with the ſcene of Mount Calvary at the coming on of evening; Chriſt ſtill hanging dead upon the croſs, the diſciples ſtanding apart and the holy women watching, amongſt whom is the Bleſſed Virgin ſupported by St. John, Chriſt having bequeathed her to his care: His addreſs to her on this ſubject, and her reply. The ſoldiers come and break the legs of the two malefactors, but finding Chriſt already dead, they pierce his heart with a ſpear and blood and water iſſues from the wound: They take him down from the croſs and lay him in the ſepulchre. His ſpirit in the meanwhile is conveyed by the angels into the region of Death; that region deſcribed, and the diſtant proſpect of the bottomleſs pit, where the ſouls of the wicked are in torment: Chriſt points out theſe ſcenes to Gabriel and inſtructs him as to the future objects of his deſcent into this gloomy region. Satan expelled from earth falls proſtrate at the foot of the throne of Death: He makes ſuit to that power for protection: Death rejects his interceſſions: The perſon and palace of the King of Terrors deſcribed: The triumphant entry of Chriſt: Satan is hurled into the bottomleſs pit and there bound by the ſtrong angel; the horrors of that dreadful abode are repreſented: Death humbles himſelf before the Redeemer of mankind, and conſcious that his power is overthrown, tenders his crown to Chriſt as to his conqueror: He lays the key at his feet, which ſets free the ſouls of the Saints, who are deſtined to be partakers of the firſt reſurrection: This key is given to Gabriel with inſtructions for their releaſe: Chriſt in his reply to Death forewarns him of his doom, but ſignifies to him that the diſſolution of his power will not be immediate. The approach of the Saints concludes the Book.

CALVARY.

BOOK VII.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

NOW Heſperus renew'd his evening lamp
And hung it forth amid the turbid ſky
To mark the cloſe of this portentous day:
The lab'ring ſun, in his mid-courſe eclips'd,
Darkling at length had reach'd his weſtern goal;
And now it ſeem'd as if all Nature ſlept
O'erſpent and wearied with convulſive throes.
Upon his croſs the martyr'd Savior hung;
Pale through the twilight gleam'd his breathleſs corpſe
And ſilvery white, as when the moon-beam plays
On the ſmooth ſurface of the glaſſy lake;
His thorn-crown'd head upon his breaſt reclin'd;
His arms were wide out-ſpread, as if in act
To' embrace and welcome the converted world:
So were they late expanded, when he cried—

Come all ye heavy laden, come to me,
And I will give you reſt! Death had not dar'd
To rob thoſe features of one heav'nly grace,
Nor had the worm authority to taint
That incorruptible and hallow'd ſhrine,
Wherein his purity had deign'd to dwell.
The living ſaints here mingling with the dead
Stood round in penſive meditation rapt,
Silent ſpectators of the awful ſcene:
There his diſciples in a group apart,
Like frighted ſheep that cluſter in a ſtorm,
Throng'd each on other interchanging looks
Of ſorrow and deſpair; no voice was heard,
No utterance but of ſighs; though all had need
Of comfort, none had comfort to beſtow.
But PETER, in whoſe ſelf-accuſing breaſt
Grief roll'd in tempeſts, had the whilſt chos'n out
A ſolitary ſpot, where at his length
Outſtretch'd with face incumbent on the ground
He lay like one, whom fortune had caſt off,
Of all hope 'reft, moſt wretched and forlorn.
There too the holy Mother might be ſeen,
Like Rizpah, watching o'er her murder'd ſon,
Rooted in earth, a monument of woe.
Beſide her, bath'd in ſympathiſing tears,

Firſt in his Maſter's love, as meek of ſoul,
Stood JOHN, adopted by his dying Lord
Son and ſupporter of that mournful Saint.
At length with reverend love he turn'd his eyes
Upon the Virgin Mother and thus ſpake.
  Oh thou! participant with God himſelf
In his incarnate Offspring, if I claim
The glorious title, which my dying Lord
On me, thy ſervant ever, now thy ſon,
Gracious bequeath'd, let not my words offend.
High honor and a truſt than life more dear
Hath CHRIST by this adoption deign'd to caſt
On me unmeriting; yet well I heard
Thoſe ſacred words—Mother, behold thy ſon;
Son, look upon thy mother!—Yes, I heard,
And treaſuring in my heart the rich bequeſt,
Bow'd and obey'd: Ev'n then my zeal had ſpoke
The dictates of devotion, had I dar'd
To break the awful ſilence of that hour,
Or ſacrilegiouſly divert the ear
Of mute attention, whilſt thoſe lips divine,
Thoſe living oracles, had breath to move;
Now mute, alas! for He is now no more,
Who had the words of life: Our hope is quench'd,
Our glory vaniſh'd. See! the deed is done:

Thoſe murderers have kill'd the Prince of Peace,
Cold on the croſs and ſtiff'ning in the wind
To the rude elements his corpſe is left;
Nor is there found, who ſhall provide a grave
For the ſad reliques of the Son of God.
But lo! the heav'ns, that three long hours have mourn'd
In darkneſs, now throw off their ſable ſhroud:
The earth no longer quakes beneath our feet,
The ſhatter'd rocks ſubſide; Nature is calm,
The ſun unmaſks and through diſparted clouds
With ruddy twilight ſtreaks the weſtern ſky.
And may not we, ſince God hath now withdrawn
His terrors and aſſwag'd the wrathful ſky,
May not we hope, that as his light revives
At the third hour, ſo of his bleſſed Son
The promis'd reſurrection to new life
At the third day ſhall alſo come to paſs?
When, as the ſun emerging from eclipſe
Darkneſs diſpells, ſo CHRIST from out the grave
Ariſing ſhall diſpell our dark deſpair?
To him the holy Mother thus replied:
Thou meek Diſciple, in thy Maſter's love
Pre-eminently bleſt, ſince He, whoſe will
Should govern, ſo decrees it, from this hour
Henceforth I lodge thee in a mother's heart

And hold thee as my ſon; for I perceive
CHRIST from his human nature is withdrawn,
And to mortality hath render'd back
All that from me a mortal he receiv'd:
His Incorruptible now lives with God,
And in that glory I no part muſt claim;
Fleſh cannot ſhare with ſpirit. Henceforth thou,
Thou art my ſon adopted in the place
Of that incarnate Virtue, of whoſe birth
Miraculous the eaſtern ſtar gave ſign,
And Angels witneſs'd him the Son of God.
And now behold! what wonders mark his death:
Whence are theſe prodigies? What but the hand
Of God can ſhake the pillars of the earth,
Seal up the ſun and rend theſe rocks in twain,
Turn day to night, tear down the temple vail,
Break up the graves and bid the ſaints come forth?
Lo, where they paſs as ſenſible to ſight
As in broad day ſubſtantial man to man.
And can we aſk if He be very CHRIST,
Whom ſtars and Angels uſher'd into birth?
Can we doubt Him on whom the Spi'rit of God
Dove-like deſcended? Can we ſtop our ears
Againſt a voice from heav'n? Are we ſo blind,
Dull and inſenſible not to behold

That ſun emergent and theſe moving ſhapes,
That to reviſit earth have left their graves,
Awaken'd as from ſleep? If theſe can riſe,
If theſe, whoſe bones are moulder'd into duſt,
On whom the worm hath fed for ages, men
As mortal as ourſelves can re-aſcend
Out of the pit, do not theſe ſigns beſpeak
His ſecond coming, who is LORD and CHRIST?
He ſhall, He ſhall return upon the earth
Victorious over death, and we, though now
Humbled in heart and for a ſeaſon ſad,
Yet wavering not in faith and holding faſt
The anchor of our hope, ſhall yet again
Behold his glory, and as now his death
Turns day to night, his reſurrection then
Shall into joy convert our preſent gloom.
But ſee, where PETER proſtrate on the earth
Is loſt in ſorrow: Haſte and bid him riſe;
Tell him the day's at hand when he muſt work.
Hath he not heard the ſervant ſhall not ſleep
In his Lord's abſence? Strengthen thou his heart!
So ſpake theſe Saints, and each to other gave
Alternate ſolace; faith inſpiring hope,
And hope aſſwaging woe. At PETER's ſide
Behold the meek diſciple—Up! he cries,

Awake

Awake and put on ſtrength: The Virgin Saint,
The Mother of our Lord, bids thee awake.
Unprofitable grief availeth nought,
But godly ſorrow is approv'd in works
Meet for repentance. Up! for CHRIST, though dead,
Yet ſpeaketh, and ſhall come again on earth:
Woe to that ſervant therefore, whom his Lord
Shall find thus ſleeping; great ſhall be his wrath.
This ſaid, he reach'd his hand and rais'd him up:
He ſtood and ſpake—Servant, of CHRIST approv'd,
Thee and thy bleſſed Sender I obey:
Yet doth my heart, by deep remorſe ſubdued,
Preſs downward to the duſt. A wretch I am,
Who hath denied his Lord: What can I do,
A miſerable man? O righteous JOHN,
When thou ſhalt ſpread abroad, as ſure thou wilt,
The direful doings of this fatal day,
And publiſh to mankind the wond'rous love
Of CHRIST thus dying for them, I conjure thee
Be faithful to the truth, ſcreen not my crime,
Foul though it be, but let the nations know
PETER, who vaunted of himſelf, was falſe,
So ſhall they reap inſtruction from my ſhame,
And by deſpiſing me correct themſelves.

Thus

Thus ſpake the contrite Saint, when now the prieſts,
Whoſe cuſtom was upon this ſolemn eve
To purge their Golgotha from human blood,
Send forth their guard official to remove
CHRIST and the ſlaves convict before the dawn
Of that great day, too hallow'd to permit
Their bodies feſt'ring on th' ill-omen'd croſs.
And lo! the ſoldiers ſo encharg'd arrive,
Survey the victims and begin the work:
But firſt the pond'rous ſledge with horrid craſh
Deſcending breaks the knees and ankle joints
Of theſe two criminals; for ſtubborn life
Still hover'd on their lips, and now and then
Their heaving boſoms fetch'd a deep-drawn ſigh,
Like the ſlow ſwell of ſeas without a wind.
But when the Savior's body they approach'd
And ſaw there needed not a ſecond blow
To make his death ſecure, the word of God
Prophetic mov'd their elſe obdurate hearts
To break no limb; yet one, ſo deſtin'd, thruſt
His ſpear into his ſide and forthwith flow'd
Water and blood from the heart-piercing wound:
So deep the ſtab, that to life's citadel,
Had life remain'd, the mortal point had reach'd

And there had finiſh'd it. Meanwhile behold!
JOSEPH arrives; a counſellor was he,
But not for death, and rich and juſt withal;
In Ramoth born, where Samuel firſt drew breath,
And as his heart in righteouſneſs and faith
Stood firm with CHRIST whilſt living, ſo his zeal
An honour'able interment to beſtow
On his dead Maſter prompted him to make
Bold ſuit to PILATE for the lifeleſs corpſe,
Nor fail'd he of his ſuit; therefore he came,
So favor'd, to receive the precious charge
Of thoſe dear reliques and with decent rites
Commit them to the grave: Spear'd to the heart,
And death with double diligence enſur'd,
The body they take down; the hands and feet
Pierc'd through with nails and all beſmear'd with blood,
O piteous ſpectacle! which to behold
Bathes every angel face in heav'n with tears!
Accurſed Deicides! the time comes on,
When every mark your ſacrilegious hands
Have printed on that corpſe ſhall be a ſeal
To teſtify againſt you, every gaſh
Unclos'd ſhall with it's living lips proclaim
CHRIST in his human attributes renew'd,
Corporeal yet immortal: Then the hand

Of him who doubts ſhall probe thoſe gaping wounds,
And by the evidence of ſenſe compel
The faithleſs and reluctant to believe.
And now they place the body on the bier,
Cleans'd of the blood and wrapt in ſeemly cloths:
Then under guard convey it to the vault
Hewn in the rock, where never corpſe was laid,
And there conſign it to it's dark abode,
Rolling a maſſy fragment to the door,
Unwieldy, vaſt; and having ſeal'd the ſtone,
They poſt their centinels, and ſo depart.
Meanwhile the' unhouſed ſpirit of CHRIST, ſet free
From groſs communion with his earthly clay,
Borne with the meteor's ſpeed upon the wings
Of mightieſt Cherubim had now approach'd
The dark confines of Death's engulph'd domain:
Here at the barrier of that vaſt profound
On the firm adamant, from whence uproſe
The tow'ring ſtructure of hell's ebon gate,
The heav'nly Viſitant deſcending bade
His cherub bearers ſtoop their wings, on which
As in a plumey chariot he rode;
And now alighted on the dreadful brink
The Savior paus'd and downward caſt his eye
O'er that immeaſurable blank, the grave

Of

Of univerſal Nature, founded then
And charter'd to the gloomy powers of Sin
And Death Sin-born, when the primæval pair
Loſt immortality and fell from God.
The ſtarry lamps of heav'n here loſt their light,
No ſun-beam ever reach'd this diſmal realm:
Yet in CHRIST's ſpi'rit divine that living light,
Which from the Father of creation flow'd
Before all time, inherently ſupplied
Self-furniſh'd viſion to explore the bounds
Of that oblivious pit, in whoſe dark womb
Myriads of unredeemed ſouls were plung'd;
All who of human birth had paſs'd that gate
From righteous Abel, the firſt-fruit of death,
To him, whoſe heart had newly ceas'd to beat,
Were in that gulph immers'd. At fartheſt end
Of that Obſcure a pillary cloud aroſe
Of ſulph'rous ſmoke, that from hell's crater ſteam'd;
Whence here and there by intermittent gleams
Blue flaſhing fires burſt forth, that ſparkling blaz'd
Up to the iron roof, whoſe echoing vault
Reſounded ever with the dolorous groans
Of the ſad crew beneath: Thence might be heard
The wailing ſuicide's remorſeful plaint;
The murd'rer's yelling ſcream, and the loud cry

Of tyrants in that fiery furnace hurl'd,
Vain cry! th' unmitigated furies urge
Their ruthleſs taſk and to the cauldron's edge
With ceaſeleſs toil huge blocks of ſulphur roll,
Pil'd mountains high to feed the greedy flames:
All theſe, th' accurſed brood of Sin, were once
The guilty pleaſures, the falſe joys, that lur'd
Their ſenſual vota'riſts to th' infernal pit:
Them their fell mother, watchful o'er the work,
With eye that ſleep ne'er clos'd and ſnaky ſcourge
Still waving o'er their heads, for ever plies.
To keep the fiery deluge at it's heighth;
And ſtops her ears againſt the clam'rous din
Of thoſe tormented, who for mercy call
Age after age implor'd and ſtill denied.
  Theſe when th' all-preſent Spirit of CHRIST deſcried
At diſtance toſſing in the ſulph'rous lake,
And heard their diſmal groans, the conſcious ſenſe
Of human weakneſs by experience earn'd
In his own mortal body now put off,
And recollection that Himſelf of late
In his ſublunar pilgrimage had prov'd
Temptations like to their's, drew from his ſoul
A ſigh of nat'ral pity, as from man
To man although in merited diſtreſs:

But

But when his human ſympathy gave place
To judgment better weigh'd and riper thoughts
Congenial with the Godhead reaſſum'd,
The juſtice of their doom, th' abhorrence due
To their vile deeds by voluntary act
Of will, left free, committed in deſpight
Of conſcience moving them to better thoughts,
Turn'd him indignant from the loathed ſight
Of theſe impenitents; when, after pauſe,
To GABRIEL, chief of the cherubic hoſt
And late his ſtrength'ning angel, thus he ſpake.
GABRIEL, or e'er from this high ſteep we launch
With prone deſcent into this gloomy vaſt,
This ſhadowy dark inane, the realm of Death,
After ſo ſwift a race through all the ſpheres
From earth to this hell's portal, it behoves
Thee and thy plumed cohort to recruit
The vigor of your wings; for ſure I am
That in this ſubterranean we ſhall find
No breeze from heav'n's pure æther to give aid
To motion, or uphold in ſteady poiſe
Your feath'ry vans outſtretch'd; nor may we look
For ſtar or planet or one ſtraggling ray
From circumlucent ſun to guide our courſe
Through this obſcure domain of Night and Death.

Nor leſs behoves thee, gentle as thou art,
Friendlieſt to man of all heav'n's angel hoſt
And for each taſk of mercy and of love
Firſt in the choice of God, to arm thy heart
For the ſad ſpectacles, the diſmal ſcenes,
Which we muſt needs encounter in this gulph
Of human miſery, this world of woes,
Fit reſidence for SATAN and his crew
Of outcaſt angels; ſad reverſe to thee
Inhabitant of heav'n: And now, behold!
Where hell's infernal pit with horrid glare
Flames through the diſmal gloom, there, but that God
In mercy films thine arch-angelic eye,
Such myriads in that ever-burning lake
Of ſouls tormented thou wouldſt elſe diſcern,
As would appal thy nature; but theſe ſcenes
From thee, a ſpi'rit ſo loving to mankind,
So melting ſoft to pity, are with-held:
No mercy can I meditate for them
Impenitent, no embaſſy of peace
Have I in charge, no reſpite, till the trump
Of general reſurrection calls them up
At the laſt day of judgment, then to hear
Their crimes rehears'd, their blaſphemies expos'd,
Their envyings, frauds, revilings, treach'ries, plots

And ev'ry ſecret of their hearts unmaſk'd
By an all-righteous Judge, who ſhall pronounce
Their final condemnation and decree
Their preſent pains perpetual. We meanwhile
To other regions ſhall divert our courſe
From them and from their torments far apart,
Regions of night and ſilence, where the ſouls
Of righteous men in their oblivious caves
Sleep out the time till their Deliverer comes
To wake them from their trance, diſſolve the ſpell
Of their enchanter Death and ſet them free
To range the fields of Paradiſe, where flows,
As from a fountain by God's preſence fed,
Beatitude ſurpaſſing human thought,
Pleaſures unſeen, unnumber'd, unconceiv'd.
This ſaid, from thoſe high battlements the Dove
Of Peace upon Redemption's errand ſent,
Borne on the wings of his cherubic choir,
Deſcended ſwift, and through the drowſy void
To Death's terrific palace ſteer'd his flight.
Here the Arch-foe of man, from earth expell'd
By man's Redeemer, newly had arriv'd,
But fear-ſtruck and in like diſaſtrous trim
With war-worn Siſera, when in his flight
From the victorious Naphthalite he came

To aſk protection at falſe Jael's tent,
And ruin found inſtead. The whirlwind's blaſt
Had ſhatter'd his proud form; now ſcorch'd by fires,
Now driv'n to regions of perpetual froſt
Beyond extremeſt Saturn's wint'ry ſphere,
No middle courſe kept he, nor had his feet
From their aërial journey once found reſt,
Till at the threſhold of Death's gloomy throne
Down on the ſolid adamant he fell
Precipitate at once, and lay entranc'd
Of arch-angelic majeſty the wreck.
Scar'd at the hideous craſh and all aghaſt
Death ſcream'd amain, then wrapt himſelf in clouds,
And in his dark pavilion trembling ſate
Mantled in night. And now the proſtrate fiend
Rear'd his terrific head with lightnings ſcorch'd
And furrow'd deep with ſcars of livid hue;
Then ſtood erect and roll'd his blood-ſhot eyes
To find the ghaſtly viſion of grim Death,
Who at the ſudden downfal of his ſire
Startled, and of his own deſtruction warn'd,
Had ſhrunk from ſight, and to a miſty cloud
Diſſolv'd hung lowring o'er his ſhrouded throne.
When SATAN, whoſe laſt hope was now at ſtake,
Impatient for the interview exclaim'd,

Where

Where art thou, Death? Why hide thyſelf from him,
Of whom thou art? Come forth, thou griſly king;
And though to ſuitor of immortal mould
Thy refuge be denied, yet at my call,
Thy father's call, come forth and comfort me,
Thou gaunt anatomy, with one ſhort glimpſe
Of thoſe dry bones, in which alone is peace
And that oblivious ſleep, for which I ſigh.
He ſaid, and now a deep and hollow groan,
Like roar of diſtant thunders, ſhook the hall,
And from before the cloud-envelop'd throne
The adamantine pavement burſt in twain
With hideous craſh ſelf-open'd, and diſplay'd
A ſubterranean chaſm, whoſe yawning vault,
Deep as the pit of Acheron, forbade
All nearer acceſs to the ſhado'wy king.
Whereat the impriſon'd winds, that in it's womb
Were cavern'd, 'gan to heave their yeaſty waves
In bubbling exhalations, till at once
Their eddying vapors working upwards burſt
From the broad vent enfranchis'd, when, behold!
The cloud that late around the throne had pour'd
More than Egyptian darkneſs, now began
To lift it's fleecy ſkirts, till through the miſt
The' imperial Phantom gleam'd; monſter deform'd;

Enormous,

Enormous, terrible, from heel to ſcalp
One dire anatomy; his giant bones
Star'd through the ſhrivell'd ſkin, that looſely hung
On his ſepulchral carcaſe; round his brows
A cypreſs wreath tiara-like he wore
With nightſhade and cold hemlock intertwin'd;
Behind him hung his quiver'd ſtore of darts
Wing'd with the raven's plume; his fatal bow
Of deadly yew, tall as Goliah's ſpear,
Propp'd his unerring arm; about his throne,
If throne it might be call'd, which was compos'd
Of human bones, as in a charnel pil'd,
A hideous group of dire diſeaſes ſtood,
Sorrows and pains and agonizing plagues,
His ghaſtly ſatellites, and, ev'n than theſe
More terrible, ambition's ſlaught'ring ſons,
Heroes and conquerors ſtil'd on earth, but here
Doom'd to ignoble drudgery, employ'd
To do his errands in the loathſome vault,
And tend corruption's never-dying worm,
To haunt the catacombs and ranſack graves,
Where ſome late popu'lous city is laid waſte
By the deſtroying peſtilence, or ſtorm'd
By murdering Ruſs or Tartar blood-beſmear'd
And furious in the deſp'rate breach to plant

His

His eagle or his creſcent on the piles
Of mangled multitudes and flout the ſky
With his victorious banners. Now a troop
Of ſhrowded ghoſts upon a ſignal given
By their terrific Monarch ſtart to fight,
Each with a torch funereal in his graſp,
That o'er the hall diffus'd a dying light,
Than darkneſs' ſelf more horrible: The walls
Of that vaſt cenotaph, hung round with ſpears,
Falchions and pole-axes and plumed helms,
Shew'd like the arm'ory of ſome warlike ſtate:
There every mortal weapon might be ſeen,
Each implement of old or new device,
Which ſavage nature or inventive art
Furniſh'd to arm the ruffian hand of war
And deal to man the life-deſtroying ſtroke:
And them betwixt at intervals were plac'd
The crowned ſkeletons of mighty kings,
Cæſars and Caliphs and barbarian Chiefs,
Monſters, whoſe ſwords had made creation ſhrink
And frighted peace and ſcience from the earth.
Pondering the ſcene in mute amazement rapt
The loſt Arch-angel ſtood, when ſoon the voice
Of Death as from the tombs low-murmuring thus
Beſpoke attention—What uncivil cauſe,

Prince of the air, provokes thee to offend
Againſt the peaceful charter of theſe realms
By voice thus rude and clamo'rous? Know'ſt thou not
I reign by privilege, though ſon not ſlave
Of thee heav'n-exil'd? Here no place haſt thou,
For here is peace; no part in this domain
To thee and to thy rebel hoſt belongs:
They in the flames of Tartarus, but we
Dwell with the ſilent worm: The pow'r we have
O'er man's corruptible and mortal part
Ends with the body; here the bones may ſleep,
For theſe anatomies diſturb us not:
But for the ſpark unquenchable, the ſoul
Immortal, which ſurvives the fleeting breath,
Of that we take no charge; that muſt abide
In other regions it's appointed lot
Of miſery or bliſs. What then hath Death
To do with SATAN? Can the ſon, who drew
Exiſtence from the father, quench that ſpi'rit,
Which God decreed eternal? Will thoſe fires
Ceaſe at my word? Hell will not hear my voice,
Nor can the howlings of th' infernal pit
Enter my ears. Aſk not repoſe of me,
Tormented fiend: There is no grave for ſin,
No ſleep for SATAN; fall'n from heav'n thou art,

There

There thou haſt no abode; fall'n now from earth,
Where is thy lodging? Where, but in thoſe flames?
Paſs on then in thy courſe, nor loiter here,
For hell expects thee: Wert thou here to ſtay,
Death in deſtroying thee himſelf deſtroys.
Whereto th' unwelcome viſitant replied—
Inhoſpitable Pow'r! and is it thus
Thou greet'ſt a father in his extreme need
Suppliant for leave to draw a moment's breath
In thy pale preſence, till this furious blaſt,
That follow'd me from earth, ſhall ſpend it's rage
And ceaſe to howl through the profound of hell?
If in thy heartleſs trunk no mem'ory dwells
Of what I was, Oh! teach me to forget
What now I am and make my ſenſes dull
To pain, as thine to gratitude are loſt:
But if thy mind be preſent to record
My fall from bliſs, will it not alſo ſerve
To put thee in remembrance how that fall
Beſtow'd on thee a ſtation and a name?
Had I not fall'n from heav'n man had not loſt
The joys of Paradiſe, immortal joys
Till I deſtroy'd them; who then but myſelf,
Exil'd from God, brought Death into the world,
Gave thee the ſepulchre for thy domain,

And every mortal body for thy prey?
Whoſe hand but SATAN's, thankleſs as thou art,
Plac'd that victorious wreath upon thy brow,
Arm'd thee for war and bade thee be a king?
And what doth SATAN now demand of Death?
What, but a moment's reſpite, the ſmall boon
Of hoſpitable ſhelter, where to lay
My aching head and reſt my weary wing?
This to the father can the ſon refuſe?
I aſk no more. If CHRIST, from whom I fly,
Purſues me to this pit, and into hell
Deſcending ſhall repaſs her gloomy gates
Guarded by Sin, that barrier loſt, farewell
To all thy greatneſs! Where ſhall be thy ſting,
O Death, and where thy victory, O Grave?
Then to have harbor'd SATAN ſhall not add
One feather to the balance of thy fate:
All muſt be loſt together; I to flames
Conſign'd, thou, Phantom, into air diſſolv'd.
No more of this vain arguing, Death replied;
My peace and my repoſe I can but deal
As God decrees, and as he wills withhold:
Thus wrangling to the lateſt hour of time
Nothing, O SATAN, could'ſt thou wring from me
But the ſame anſwer and the ſame deſpair:

I with

I with mortality alone confer,
Thou art a deathleſs ſpirit: If my pow'r
Cannot annihilate the ſoul of man,
How then of angel? Guilty thou haſt been,
Conſcious muſt ever be, and therefore curſt.
Of me complaining thou condemn'ſt thyſelf,
The righteous ever are at peace with Death;
Thou art not of their number. Spi'rit unbleſt,
Author of man's revolt and all things ill,
The hell which thou haſt peopled, is thine own.
Earth thou haſt made a ruin, men by thee
Perverted turn to monſters, Heav'n itſelf,
Diſturb'd by thy rebellion, for a while
Suffer'd convulſion, and her thrones beſieg'd
Echo'd the din of battle; the fair bloom
Of Paradiſe was blaſted by thy ſpells,
And man driv'n forth to till th' unthankful earth
And toil and ſweat for a precarious meal,
Degraded from his origin, at length
To me and to corruption was conſign'd.
Theſe were thy doings, this was my deſcent,
And my inheritance the loathſome worm,
The throne funereal and this yawning gulph
Impaſſable, which I am yet to thank
For that it holds thee at a diſtance from me:

This

This is thy bounty. Look upon theſe bones,
Survey this dread anatomy, and ſay
If ſon ſo faſhion'd owes his father thanks:
Proportion'd to thy goodneſs I accord
My gratitude by bidding thee avaunt;
Hence from my ſight, intruder! Thruſt from earth
As heretofore from heav'n, and tempeſt-torn
With bruiſed head and ſhatter'd flagging wing
Hither thou com'ſt a fugitive from Him,
Whom in the wilderneſs for forty days
Tempting thou didſt annoy: Dull, doating ſpirit!
Blind to thine own deſtruction, not to ſee
God's pow'r in CHRIST, nor underſtand that He,
Who foil'd thy cunning, might defy thy ſtrength:
But neither ſtrength nor cunning ſhall prevail
To draw me forth upon a loſing ſide,
And ſet this empire on a deſp'rate caſt:
I lack preſumption to oppoſe that Power,
Which puts hell's monarch to inglorious flight.
What ſhelter can'ſt thou find behind a ſhade,
An airy phantom? Such thou ſay'ſt I am,
Such let me be! That phantom will not tempt
The furious blaſt of God's avenging breath,
Nor mov'd to pity by thy treacherous plaints
Tender oblivion's boon to ſoul accurſt:

Such

Such favor when thou wouldſt extort from Death,
That phantom will be adamant to thee.
Now learn a truth: CHRIST in the fleſh is dead;
Yet long I cannot hold him in the grave;
His body interdicted to the worm
For ſome myſterious purpoſe is reſerv'd
From all corruption free, and ſure I am
He will not leave his enemy at large
In this obſcure domain, where ſleep the ſouls
Of righteous men; fly then, whilſt yet the hour
Serves thee for flight—And hark! the angel trump
Sounds his approach. Now tremble, thou accurſt!
No more; encanopied beneath the wings
Of mighty Cherubim with ſounding trump
And joyful chaunt the LORD OF LIFE came on—
Lift up your heads, the heav'nly chorus ſung,
Lift up your heads, ye everlaſting gates,
And CHRIST the King of Glory ſhall come in—
Bright as the ſun his preſence; darkneſs fled
Down to the center; SATAN on the earth
Fell motionleſs; Death trembled on his throne,
And call'd his ſhadowy guards, they with loud ſhrieks
Vaniſh'd in air, whilſt from the gulph profound
Blue lightnings flaſh'd and deep-mouth'd thunders roar'd;

When CHRIST with eye ſevere on SATAN turn'd
Bade the ſtorm ceaſe and thus addreſs'd the fiend.
Well art thou found, thou ſerpent, on the brink
Of thy laſt home, this horrible abyſs,
For thee and for thine impious crew prepar'd.
Man from his God by thy corruption turn'd
Is by my death receiv'd into the peace
Of his offended Maker, and if faith
Opens his way to heav'n in righteouſneſs
And true converſion, Death cannot retain
His ſoul in darkneſs, nor thy crafty wiles
Puzzle his path and damp his glowing zeal;
But thou preſumptuous, who haſt had the world
To range at will, and from God's altars pluck'd
Their conſecrated honors, falſely view'd
Thoſe ſpoils, by ſufferance yielded, as the prize
Of thine own proper victory. Behold!
Theſe are thy triumphs; in this pit receive
Thy folly's confutation and the doom
Of woe eternal on thy ſin denounc'd.
He ſaid, nor other anſwer SATAN gave
Than one deep groan rent from his lab'ring breaſt.
The ſtrong vindictive Angel, to whoſe charge
The key of that infernal pit belong'd,

Now ſeiz'd him in his graſp and from the ground
Lifting his pond'rous bulk, ſuch vigor dwelt
In arm celeſtial, headlong down at once
Down hurl'd him to the bottom of the gulph,
Then follow'd on the wing: His yelling cries
Death heard, whilſt terror ſhiver'd every bone:
Not ſo the choir cherubic; they with joy
Beheld Redemption's triumph in the fall
Of that Great Dragon, enemy of man,
That antient Serpent, now with bruiſed head
And ſting-bereft hurl'd down into the pit:
Whereat in heav'nly concert they begin
To raiſe their tuneful voices and ſing forth
Praiſe to the Lamb of God, and joyful ſtrain
Of gratulation to the Saints redeem'd—
  Now is ſalvation come and ſtrength and power,
The kingdom of our God and of his CHRIST:
Now is that railing and malignant foe
Caſt down into the pit, which day and night
Accus'd our righteous brethren to their God:
Now are they made victorious by the blood
Of the Redeeming Lamb, and in the word
Of Truth, their fearleſs witneſs, through the world
Go forth againſt the anarchy of Sin
A hoſt of martyrs faithful unto death;

Therefore rejoice, ye heav'ns, and ye of earth
Inhabitants, awake to joy and hail
The day-ſpring of Salvation from on high.
SATAN meanwhile ten thouſand fathoms deep
At bottom of the pit, a mangled maſs
With ſhatter'd brain and broken limbs outſpread,
Lay groaning on the adamantine rock:
Him the ſtrong Angel with ethereal touch
Made whole in form, but not to ſtrength reſtor'd,
Rather to pain and the acuter ſenſe
Of ſhame and torment; hideous was the glare
Of his blood-ſtreaming eyes and loud he yell'd
For very agony, whilſt on his limbs
The maſſy fetters, ſuch as hell alone
Could forge in hotteſt ſulphur, were infix'd
And rivetted in the perpetual ſtone:
Upon his back he lay extended, huge,
A hideous ruin; not a word vouchſaf'd
That vengeful Angel, but with quick diſpatch
Plied his commiſſion'd taſk, then ſtretch'd the wing
And upward flew; for now th' infernal cave
Through all it's vaſt circumference had giv'n
The dreadful warning, and began to cloſe
It's rocky ribs upon th' impriſon'd fiend:
Fierce and more fierce as it approach'd became

The flaming concave; thus compreſt, the vault
Red as metallic furnace glow'd intenſe
With heat, that had the hideous den been leſs
Than adamant it had become a flood,
Or SATAN other than he was in ſin
And arch-angelic ſtrength pre-eminent,
He neither could have ſuffer'd nor deſerv'd:
Panting he roll'd in ſtreams of ſcalding ſweat,
Parch'd with intolerable thirſt, one drop
Of water then to cool his raging tongue
Had been a boon worth all his golden ſhrines:
Vain wiſh! for now the pit had clos'd it's mouth,
Nor other light remain'd than what the glare
Of thoſe reverberating fires beſtow'd:
Then all the dungeon round was thick beſet
With horrid faces, threat'ning as they glar'd
Their haggard eyes upon him; from hell's lake
Flocking they came, whole legions of the damn'd,
His worſhippers on earth, ſenſual, profane,
Abominable in their lives, monſters of vice,
Blood-ſtained murderers, apoſtate kings,
And crowned tyrants ſome, tormented now
For their paſt crimes and into furies turn'd,
Accuſing their betrayer: Curſes dire,
Hiſſings and tauntings now from every ſide

Affail'd his ear, on him, on him alone,
From Cain firſt murderer to ISCARIOT all,
All with loud voices charg'd on him their ſins,
Their agonies, with imprecations urg'd
For treble vengeance on his head accurſt,
Founder of hell, ſole author of their woe,
And enemy avow'd of all mankind.
Now when the King of Terrors had perceiv'd
The pow'r of his new Viſitant and ſaw
SATAN engulph'd and the devouring pit,
Beſt barrier of his throne, for ever clos'd,
Deſcending from his ſtate with heart abaſh'd,
Conſcious that pride would ill befriend him now
In preſence of his Conqueror, at the feet
Of CHRIST with low obeiſance he put off
The trophies of his brow, and on the knee,
Stooping his vaſſal head, low homage paid,
And ſuppliant thus his humble ſuit preferr'd.
Immortal King! all glorious and all good,
At whoſe great name befits that every knee
In heav'n or earth or in theſe realms beneath
Should bend adoring, let thy will prevail
Here, as wherever elſe! And ſure I am
'Tis not my pow'r but thine own wond'rous love,
Conſenting to the deed, hath brought thee here

In

In pity to mankind to taſte the cup
Of agony and viſit theſe ſad ſhades,
Though deathleſs; thence to re-aſcend, as ſoon
Thou ſhalt, victorious to the realms of light.
I know thee for the CHRIST the Son of God,
Meſſias of the prophets long foreſeen,
Yet of the unbelieving Jews deſpis'd,
Rejected, for thou cam'ſt not in the pomp
Of tempo'ral majeſty and only great
In patience, in humility, in love
And miracles of mercy. At thy feet
This head uncrown'd thus ſtooping, I reſign
All empire; not on me let fall thy wrath
As on that bruiſed Serpent. What am I?
What is the ſword, what is the peſtilence,
And all my hoſt of mortal miniſters,
But ſervants of thy providence, a ſcourge
And rod of vengeance, wherewith to chaſtiſe
Preſumptuous, guilty pride? Whoſe hand but mine
Strikes terror to the atheiſt's harden'd heart?
Who plucks the tyrant from his bloody car
And rolls him in the duſt? or at a blow
Strangles the curſe in the blaſphemer's throat?
If on the martyr's head my axe deſcends,
The ſame hand plants a crown of glory there;

And if in my dark caves the righteous ſleep,
Peaceful they ſleep; I break not their repoſe,
For ſilence dwells with me and night and reſt.
Behold the key inviolate that guards
Their hallow'd ſlumbers; never did I yield,
Though oft ſolicited, this ſacred pledge
To SATAN or his ſin-defiled crew;
Faithful I've kept it ever, faithful now
To thee their Savior I reſign my charge.

This ſaid, the golden badge of his command,
Rich and of heav'nly workmanſhip with gems
Of azure, green and purple thick emboſs'd,
Humbly he laid at the REDEEMER's feet:
He to the zeal of GABRIEL ſtrait conſign'd
Th' enlargement of thoſe ſpi'rits to bliſs preferr'd,
Fit miniſter for office ſo benign:
Whereat he bade ſound forth the ſignal trump
Of the Firſt Reſurrection, heard of none
Save of thoſe holy Saints elect of God,
Martyrs and prophets, call'd to live with CHRIST
In antecedent glory till the day
Of general Reſurrection ſhall awaken
And ſummon into judgment all mankind.
Swift hied that friendly Angel on the wing,
Swifter, for that, on gracious errand ſent,

Joy

Joy urg'd him to put forth his utmoſt ſpeed;
Meanwhile the heav'nly Viſitant of Death
Upon that ghaſtly Viſion turn'd his eyes,
And thus in accent mild addreſs'd the Shade.'
That I came down from heav'n and am the CHRIST,
Rightly, O Death, thou haſt pronounc'd; yet here
I come not to deſtroy thy power at once,
But to ſet free the Saints thou hold'ſt in thrall,
And call them to my peace; but ev'n of theſe
Part till my ſecond coming muſt abide:
Of thee and all things of corruption bred
The term is fix'd; God muſt be all in all:
But time, as man computes, hath yet to roll
Through numerous ages ere the final trump
Shall ſound thy knell. I brought not upon earth
Peace, but the ſword; the goſpel I have preach'd
Man will corrupt, miſconſtrue and pervert;
Nor ſhall my Church be only drench'd with blood
Of it's own martyrs, zealots ſhall ariſe
Aliens to my humility and peace,
With more than pagan enmity enflam'd
Each againſt other; then ſhall ruthleſs war
And perſecution and fierce civil rage
Ravage the Chriſtian world; intole'rant pride,
Uſurping pow'r infallible, ſhall ſend

It's heralds forth with curſing in their mouths
And fetters for man's conſcience in their hands;
They in the battle's front ſhall plant the Croſs
And bid the unconverted nations kneel
Under their conqu'ring ſtandard and adopt
The creed of murderers, who, in the place
Of the pure bond of charity, preſent
A forged ſcroll blurr'd and defac'd with lies,
And impiouſly inſcribe it with my Name.
Theſe are religion's traitors, and from them
An ample harveſt ſhalt thou reap, O Death;
Suffice it thee to know that for a while
Thou ſhalt be ſpar'd: And now no more; Behold!
GABRIEL leads on the congregated Saints.
Vaniſh, pale Phantom! Give the ranſom'd place.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK VIII.

The ARGUMENT of the EIGHTH BOOK.

Chriſt, having cloſed his interview with Death, prepares to receive the Saints of the Firſt Reſurrection now approaching under the conduct of the angel Gabriel, and having aſcended a mount in the midſt of the congregation appears to them in glory: They pay homage to their Redeemer in a hymn of praiſe and thankſgiving: He addreſſes them in reply, and aſſures them of the bleſſings of immortal life beſtowed upon them by the Father as the reward of righteouſneſs: The patriarch Abraham enters into conference with Chriſt, in the concluſion of which the Savior of the world ſhews him the glorious viſion of the heavenly Jeruſalem, the holy city, as deſcribed in the Apocalypſe: When this beatific viſion is paſſed away, Chriſt reaſcends to earth in view of the whole aſſembly of Saints: The angel Gabriel, who is left behind, addreſſes them from the mount and expounds the purpoſes of the Savior's reſurrection from the dead and return to earth: Moſes recapitulates the events of his life, inſtances the frequent rebellions of the Lord's unfaithful people, and laments their future impenitence and incredulity: Gabriel replies, and from the nature of man's free will explains the origin and neceſſity of evil, from which he deduces the benefits of Chriſt's death and redemption: And now the Spirit of God deſcending on the hearts of the righteous, inſpires them with all underſtanding and knowledge, fitted to their happy condition: A Paradiſe ariſes within the regions of Death; Gabriel addreſſes them for the laſt time, and upon his departure the Poem concludes.

CALVARY.

BOOK VIII.

THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

NOW had the Savior by the word of power
Wafted the magic Phantom into air,
And all the horrors of the ſcene diſpell'd:
Swift as the ſtroke of his own winged dart,
Or flitting ſhadows by the moon-beam chas'd,
Death on the inſtant vaniſh'd: What had ſeem'd
A citadel of proud and martial port
With baſtions fenc'd and tow'rs impregnable
Of adamant compos'd and lofty dome,
Covering the throne imperial, now was air;
And, far as eye could reach, a level plain,
In the intermin'able horizon loſt,
Unfolded it's vaſt champain to the view.
Darkneſs twin-born with Death had fled; the rays,
That from the Savior's ſun-crown'd temples beam'd,

With dazzling luſtre brighten'd all the ſcene.
There juſt emerging to the diſtant view,
And glitt'ring white, a multitude appear'd,
Stretch'd eaſt and weſt in orderly array,
Swift marching underneath the mighty wings
Of the protecting Angel, who in air
Soar'd imminent, and with the broad expanſe
From flank to flank envelop'd all the hoſt:
He with the blaſt of the awak'ning trump
Gave note of their advance. In the mid-plain
There was a mount; thither the Savior hied
With his cherubic guard, and there in view
Of the aſſembled myriads ſtood ſublime.
The Saints in order form'd themſelves around,
Orb within orb, each in his proper ſphere
Inſtinctively arrang'd; then all at once,
As by one ſoul inſpir'd, with bended knee
And forehead proſtrate on the earth they paid
Joint homage and ador'd. Oh! who ſhall dare
With bold conjecture to compute the liſt
Of that bleſt multitude, or ſay, who firſt,
Who laſt, receiv'd the glorious All-hail,
Ye bleſſed of my Father? Yet perchance,
So warranted by ſcripture and ſo taught
By moral ſage experience, we may doubt

If many rich, if many great or learn'd
Were of that righteous company; be ſure
The lover of this world had there no place,
He barter'd it for gold, he paſs'd it off
To Belial for a periſhable toy,
He ſold it to a wanton: There the proud
Were brought down, and the meek and lowly rais'd:
The conque'ror not of others but himſelf
There found pre-eminence: All joy to him,
Who rear'd the orphan, dried the widow's tears,
And ſought affliction in her ſecret haunts,
Not for the praiſe of men; and may not we,
Born in an age when mild philanthropy
Hath taught a better leſſon to the heart,
May not we foſter a kind hope that ſome
Of pagan name were call'd, who through the maze
Of dark idolatry took Reaſon's clue,
And found a mental avenue to God?
Here with the Father of the Faithful ſtood
A hoſt of patriarchs, prophets, judges, ſaints:
Noah, who perfect in the time of wrath
And righteous found, was left unto the earth
A remnant, when the waters fell from heav'n,
And was in covenant with the Moſt High
That man no more ſhould periſh by the flood:

Moſes,

Moſes, the faithful ſervant of the Lord,
Meekeſt, though mightieſt, of the ſons of men
And glorious in the fight of dreadful kings:
Joſhua, th' avenger of th' Elect of God,
Whoſe voice upon mount Gibeon ſtaid the ſun
In the mid-heav'n, and bade the moon ſtand ſtill
In Ajalon's dark vale, till Iſrael ceas'd
From ſlaughter and the conqu'ring ſword was ſheath'd:
Here Samuel in his linen ephod girt,
Thrice call'd of God, amid the foremoſt ſtood:
He, who with Baäl's prieſts contending rear'd
His rival altars and brought fire from heav'n
To vindicate his God: The Pſalmiſt King,
And he, at whoſe ſick pray'r the ſun went back,
And he, ſurnam'd the Good: Daniel the ſeer,
And they, who in the furnace walk'd unhurt;
All in the ſacred page recorded juſt
And faithful ſervants of the living God:
For who can doubt the holy word of truth
Atteſting their ſalvation? Yet there is
One, who, by promiſe ſacredly aſſur'd
Of bliſs immediate, heard the glorious call,
Whilſt hanging on the croſs, by penitence
And faith obtain'd from the all-gracious lips
Of God's own Son expiring at his ſide.

Hail,

Hail, holy congregation, elder-born
Of righteouſneſs and firſt-fruits of the grave,
Elect unto ſalvation! Hail, bleſt Saints,
Now cloathed in white robes, as in your lives
With purity, ſound forth your praiſe to God
And to the Lamb, in whoſe blood ye are waſh'd;
Wave high your branches of victorious palm,
Hymning the ſtrain, which He in Patmos heard,
What time the glorious viſion was reveal'd.
Hail, Firſt and Laſt! th' immortal chorus ſung,
Of all things the beginning and the end;
For thou art he, who liveth and waſt dead,
And lo! thou art alive for evermore,
And hold'ſt in hand of hell and death the keys.
Salvation to our God and to the Lamb
At his right hand, who ſitteth on the throne;
Bleſſing and glory, wiſdom, honor, power,
Might and thankſgiving evermore to God
And to his CHRIST! Father, we give thee thanks,
Lord God, which waſt and art and art to come,
For this thy mighty pow'r in us fulfill'd.
Now are the kingdoms of this world become
The kingdoms of our Lord and of his CHRIST,
And he ſhall reign for ever; now thy wrath
On the rebellious nations is let looſe;

Now is the firſt call of the ſleeping ſaints,
And all thy ſervants faithful unto death
Thou haſt rewarded with eternal bliſs.
Henceforth for ever bleſſed are the dead,
Thus dying in the Lord, for they ſhall reſt
From labor, and their good works are not loſt!

Their hymn perform'd, the whole redeemed hoſt,
With hands uplifted and all eyes direct
Upon the glorious Preſence, bent the knee
Silent, whilſt thus the LORD OF MERCY ſpake.

Ye bleſſed of my Father, prophets, ſaints
And martyrs; ye of Abraham's faithful ſtock,
And ye, though wild by nature, grafted in
Upon the parent tree and bearing fruits
To life eternal, welcome to my peace!
Now are your watchings and your labors paſt,
Your tribulations, ſelf-denials, pains
And mournings recompens'd; never again
Shall ye know thirſt or hunger, nor the ſun
Scorch you by day, nor yet by night the moon;
For ye ſhall dwell before the throne of God,
And I will feed you; I will lead you forth
To living founts and wipe away all tears.
Come, enter ye into your Maſter's joy,
Come, for the throne awaits you, take the crown

Of

Of glory, take the kingdom from all time
For you prepar'd, poſſeſs your happy rights,
The earnings of your charity and love:
For I was hungred and ye gave me meat,
Thirſty I was and ye aſſwag'd my thirſt,
I was a ſtranger and ye took me in,
Naked ye cloath'd me, ſick ye viſited,
I was in priſon and ye came unto me.
When Lord, the righteous humbly interpos'd,
When were theſe charities by us perform'd?
How have we merited this praiſe of thee,
Whom in the fleſh we knew not? Tell us, Lord,
When ſaw we thee an-hungred and gave food?
When thirſty and gave drink? a ſtranger when
And took thee in, naked and cloathed thee;
When ſaw we thee in ſickneſs or in priſon
And came unto thee? When didſt thou endure
Theſe hard neceſſities, or we relieve?
Whereto the LORD replied: Truly ye ſay
Me in the fleſh ye knew not, yet in ſpi'rit
Ye knew me, for my law was in your hearts;
And what to theſe my brethren ye have done,
Or to the leaſt of theſe, ye did to me,
Patron of mercy and the friend of man.
To every one, but not to all alike,

Some talent is in truſt, the loan of Heav'n,
To huſband as he may, and he who ſpares
From his imparted fund wherewith to help
His neighbor's ſcantier dole, improves the loan
And makes his Lord his debtor. Firſt and laſt,
Ere Abraham was I am. Open your ears!
Hear, mark and underſtand: The world by ſin
Original had fallen off from God;
Man was become corrupt, idolatrous,
Abominable; SATAN reign'd on earth.
Ye are of various ages; all have ſlept,
And ſome from earlieſt times or e'er the flood
Swallow'd the nations, yet with one accord
All in your ſeveral periods have bewail'd
Degenerated man: Noah can tell
How all the earth with violence was fill'd,
Or e'er the fountains of the vaſty deep
Were broken up: Moſes can well declare
How hard and to rebellion prone the hearts
Of thoſe, whom he led forth: Samuel beheld
A ſtiff-neck'd generation ſpurn the yoke
And kick againſt their God; but vain his voice,
Vain all the prophets voices, which foretold
My coming, without whom the world were loſt.
Now is ſalvation come; I've drank the cup

Of bitterneſs and died the death for man:
My peace I've left on earth; the living world,
They have the word of truth and by that word
Through faith they ſhall be ſav'd; from them I came
To viſit theſe dark regions and redeem
The ſaints who ſlept; behold! ye are alive:
Death hath no more dominion; SATAN, chain'd
For ages, ſhall abide his time to come:
Meanwhile in glory ye ſhall dwell with me;
By reſurrection purchas'd with my blood
Ye are the firſt-fruits of immortal life.
Now ABRAHAM, father of the faithful band
And firſt in ſtation neareſt to the mount,
His eyes uplifted to the face divine
Of the effulgent Virtue, and thus ſpake.
Yet once more, as aforetime in the days
Of Sodom, ſuffer me to plead for man,
And aſk of thee his Savior if theſe few,
Few not in numbers, yet for heav'n too few
And for heav'n's mercy, ſeeing there are paſt
So many many ages of the world,
Are all that ſhall be ſav'd: Alas, for man!
If this be the whole remnant, all the ſtock
Cull'd from ſo many myriads for God's fold.
Where are the nations vaniſh'd? Where the hoſts,

That ſea, earth, flood and fire have ſwallow'd up?
Can hell contain them? Can devouring Death
Find ſtomach for them all? Did God make man
For death and hell, or thou endure the croſs
Only for us? Are all the righteous ſhrunk
To this ſmall meaſure? And, if theſe be all,
Are they not yet enough to ſave the reſt,
If heav'nly mercy liſten to our prayer?
May not our righteouſneſs ſo ſave a world
From wrath, as once the righteouſneſs of five
Had ſav'd a guilty city from it's fate?
To him the LORD OF MERCY: I have ſaid
Ye are the firſt fruits by my blood obtain'd,
The earneſt of redemption: I have bruis'd,
Not cruſh'd, the Serpent's head; he ſhall ariſe
Out of the pit once more to vex the earth.
Death the laſt enemy is not deſtroy'd,
Yet is his ſceptre ſhorten'd, and the key,
That opens into life, now in thoſe hands,
Where mercy beſt can place it for man's good:
Thus of all pow'r though Death is not bereft,
Yet I have ſhook his throne, with inroad deep
Pierc'd his dark realm, and, you redeeming thence,
Made tenantleſs your graves, his ſtrongeſt holds.
With you when from this depth I reaſcend,

And through heav'n's golden portal lead my hoſt
Of Saints high-waving theſe victorious palms,
Your white robes glitt'ring in God's ſtarry courts,
Great ſure will be the triumph, loud th' acclaim,
When all my Father's Angels ſhall ſound forth
Their joyful halelujahs round his throne.
Enough for victory hath been atchiev'd,
Deſtruction is reſerv'd to that great day,
When the compelling Angel ſhall go forth
To gather every atom of man's duſt,
Which the ſeas cover or the earth contains:
Then ſhall all ſouls be judg'd; if Abraham then,
When of all hearts the ſecrets ſhall be known,
Then if the Friend of God hath aught to urge
In mitigation of man's guilt, be ſure,
Ere juſtice ſtrike, mercy will hear the plea.
Of this no more: The ſeaſons and the times
Are with the Father; the dread hour draws on:
But I muſt firſt reviſit thoſe on earth,
Whom I have left in ſorrow; for their ſakes
I muſt again ſubmit me to the fleſh,
And by the evidence of ſenſe confirm
My promis'd reſurrection; this perform'd
And immortality reveal'd to man,
By faith made ſure, my goſpel ſhall go forth:

My

My office then the Comforter will take;
The weak he ſhall make ſtrong, the fooliſh wiſe,
And by the mouths of ſucklings and of babes
He ſhall confound the wiſdom of the world,
And o'er the gates of hell erect my Church.
  When thus the Patriarch, glowing ſtill with zeal
For man's ſalvation, further queſtion urg'd.
  Lord, will not then the faithleſs world believe,
When thou return'ſt with glory? From the dead
When they behold thee viſible on earth
And thence to heav'n aſcending, can they doubt?
Such revelation can their eyes reſiſt,
Their ears ſuch truth recorded? Shall there then
Be left a Gentile idol upon earth
To rival Iſrael's God? Shall there not be
One Shepherd and one fold for all mankind,
One faith, one baptiſm, one LORD and CHRIST?
But I perhaps too bold offend thine ear
With my rude converſe; Lord, if ſo, command
My tongue to ſilence; yet not in thy wrath,
Not in thy wrath, O Lord, reprove my zeal.
  Whereto the Savior mildly thus replied.
O Abraham, in whoſe ſoul compaſſion glows
And love, that burns with zeal for all thy ſons,
Nor for thy ſons alone, but the whole world,

Whoſe

Whoſe advocate thou art, think not the tongue,
That ſpeaks for mercy, can offend my ear:
Yet what thy zeal anticipates in time
Is diſtant far; ages muſt roll betwixt
Thy hope and its completion; threat'ning clouds
Lour on the glorious proſpect; ſeas of blood
Muſt firſt be paſs'd; long pilgrimage and ſad
My martyrs have to make through vallies dark,
Where ign'rance ſhades the ſun, through frightful haunts,
Where ſuperſtition pictures out the ſcene
In monſtrous forms, and worſhips what it dreads:
Painful their march and round beſet with ſnares;
Here treach'ry lurks, there perſecution flames,
Before them infidelity, behind
Reproach and ſlander and the roar of tongues
Contentious, urging them to turn from God
And waſte their nobler zeal in vain diſpute.
Thus ſtep by ſtep in righteouſneſs and faith
Arm'd at all points my ſervants militant
Shall win their way, and what they earn enjoy.
Lowly and meek I came into the world,
And meek and lowly I ſhall now return,
Not with that glory riſing from the grave,
Which for my ſecond coming is reſerv'd,
But in that mortal body, which they pierc'd,

Shewing

Shewing my wounds, not with the proud diſplay
Of one, who courts the voice of public fame,
But communing apart with thoſe I left
To be my witneſſes, that ſo through them
Men may be taught by reaſon to diſcern
Not what they muſt, but what they ſhould, believe;
Not by the evidence of ſenſe to feel,
But by the mind's conviction to perceive
Truth in it's argument, not act, and build
On reaſon, not neceſſity, their faith,
And on their faith and their good works their hope.
God will not always ſtruggle with mankind,
Heap proof on proof till incredulity
Though blind muſt ſee, though deaf of force muſt hear;
He will not bring his heav'n upon the earth,
Rather will lead man's heart from earthly things
To reach at heavenly; the railing Jews,
Who fix'd me to the croſs, bade me come down
And with the ſign of pow'r diſpel their doubts:
So had I fruſtrated all faith at once,
And with all faith all virtue: I was dumb,
I open'd not my mouth to their reproach,
I ſtirr'd not from the croſs, I died the death,
Nor to my reſcue brought one Angel down,
Though legions waited to obey my call:

And now none other ſign will I vouchſafe
But of the prophet Jonas, for as he
From out the belly of the whale emerg'd
On the third day, ſo I from out the tomb
In the ſame body will come forth on earth
With the third morning's dawn; thus ſhall the word
Of prophecy by my diſciples heard,
Not underſtood, be perfected in me,
And I will breathe my ſpi'rit into their hearts
To comprehend all ſcriptures, and to preach
Me crucified; nor ſhall there be a dearth
Of witneſſes to publiſh and atteſt
My reſurrection; hundreds ſhall behold
My ſubſtance in the fleſh, and he that doubts
Shall touch me and believe. More to expound
There needs not; this in all your ears aloud
I now promulgate, that when I am gone
Ye may abide the interim in peace,
By terror or impatience undiſturb'd:
And now not many are the days to paſs,
Ere to the heav'n of heav'ns I ſhall aſcend,
And there in bleſt communion with my Saints,
Made perfect after death, for ever dwell
At the right hand of Pow'r; meanwhile the ſeed,
Which I have ſown, though of all grains the leaſt,

Yet water'd by the Comforter ſhall grow
Of herbs the greateſt, and become a tree,
Within whoſe branches all the birds of air
Shall come and lodge, ſo ſhall my kingdom riſe
From mean beginning into mighty growth,
A ſtill ſmall current, ſpreading as it goes;
For in the arm of man I place no ſtrength,
Nor in the battle's thunder can be heard
His voice that preacheth peace; to ſtorm the ear,
Like thoſe loud heathen orators, who ſhake
The forum with their eloquence, ill ſuits
The ſervants of a Maſter little vers'd
In this world's wiſdom and not vain of ſpeech:
In love, in calm perſuaſion and in peace
My goſpel I have planted: Woe to them,
Who in the place of theſe ſweet fruits provoke
The baneful growth of perſecution, ſtrife
And diſcord in my Church, op'ning my wounds
Unheal'd and crucifying me afreſh.
To him the Patriarch: Lord, we give thee thanks
For that thou haſt imparted to thy ſaints
Theſe tidings of great joy, though diſtant far
And through ſuch clouds of ſorrow dimly ſeen;
And ſure we are thy goſpel ſhall prevail,
Yet much do we lament for what thy ſaints

And martyrs have to ſuffer upon earth,
Foil'd by that firſt Deceiver of mankind,
Who, though now bruis'd and for awhile enchain'd,
Shall yet come forth to vex thy holy Church,
To conjure up falſe prophets and pervert
Thy follo'wers, who are taught to live in peace
And charity with all men: But we know
God did not build this goodly frame of things
For SATAN to deſtroy, and he and Death
Shall have an end: Heav'n is man's natural home
And righteouſneſs the impulſe of his heart;
Nor will God fail his promiſe, that in me
And in my ſeed the whole world ſhall be bleſt:
Ah! when ſhall I behold that promis'd day?
When ſhall I ſee the warring world at peace?
When ſhall my Iſrael, ſcatter'd o'er the earth
And ſtraggling wide, hear their good Shepherd's call
And come into his fold? Sure that bleſt voice,
That glorious viſion would be heav'n itſelf.
That viſion thou ſhalt ſee, the LORD replied
And ſmil'd all-gracious on th' enraptur'd Saint,
From this proſpective mount with purged eye,
That through the length'ning tract of time diſcerns
Futurity remote, thou ſhalt behold
Th' Apocalypſe, which to no living eye,

Save of my ſervant John, I ſhall diſcloſe:
But know ere this bleſt period ſhall arrive
The elements muſt melt with fervent heat,
And earth and ſea and heav'n muſt paſs away,
Darkneſs and ſin and death ſhall be no more,
And a new world ſhine forth. Aſcend the mount,
And eaſtward turning tell me what thou ſee'ſt.
I ſee, the Patriarch cried, an heaven and earth,
Earth without ſea and heav'n without a cloud,
All bright and gliſt'ning from the Maker's hands:
I ſee deſcending from the throne of God
Jeruſalem the Holy City, new,
Deck'd like a bride for her celeſtial ſpouſe:
Order and grace and ſymmetry conſpire
In all her parts, and with the rich diſplay
Of vivid gems make glorious her attire:
To the four points of heav'n in equal ſpan
She ſtretches out her many-colour'd walls,
Celeſtial maſonry, whoſe meaneſt ſtone,
More rare and precious than the brighteſt gem
Of earthly diadems, tranſparent flames,
From the foundations to the topmoſt cope
Of mural battlement one dazzling blaze
Of glorious jewelry, and them amidſt
On every flank quadrangular three gates,

Each

Each of an orient pearl, to our twelve tribes
By number and by name appropriate,
Stand open, guarded by Cherubic watch;
Through whoſe unfolded portals I deſcry
A city all of pureſt gold and clear
As the unclouded cryſtal, on whoſe towers
God's all-ſufficient glory ſheds a flood
Of radiance brighter than the borrow'd beam
Of ſhadowy moon or ſun oft wrapt in clouds,
Making alternate night and day on earth:
But night is here unknown; day needeth not
To reſt in darkneſs, nor the eye in ſleep;
Nor temple here for worſhip may be found,
The ever-preſent Deity demands
No houſe of pray'r; in ev'ry heart is built
His altar, every voice records his praiſe,
And every ſaint his miniſter and prieſt.
Through the mid-ſtreet a cryſtal river flows
Pellucid, welling from the throne of God,
It's living ſource, upon whoſe border ſprings
The tree of life, bearing ambroſial fruits
Monthly renew'd and varied through the year,
Food for immortals, in whoſe balmy gum
And leaves medicinal a virtue dwells
So general and potential, that no pain

Or ailment but here finds it's ready cure:
No tear ſhall wet this conſecrated ſoil,
Nor feud nor clamor nor unholy curſe
Diſturb theſe peaceful echoes, here the ſaints
In ſweet harmonious brotherhood ſhall dwell
Serene and perfect in the ſight of God.
And hark! I hear ſeraphic voices chaunt
To their melodious harps the bridal hymn—
Now is our God eſpouſed to his Church,
And from their heav'nly union are gone forth
Bleſſing and peace and joy to all mankind:
Now ſhall his ſaints eternal Sabbath keep
From death and pain and wailing and complaint:
All is made new, the old is paſs'd away,
Time draws aſide the faded ſcene of things
And Nature in immortal freſhneſs blooms:
Now to the waters of the fount of life,
Perpetual waters, every ſoul may come,
And he that is athirſt may freely drink:
But fire and brimſtone in the burning lake
Shall be their portion, who revolt from God;
There with the Beaſt in torments they ſhall dwell,
Seal'd in their foreheads with his mark and drink
The cup of indignation to the dregs
Wrung out in anger, whilſt their ceaſeleſs cry

Shall

Shall with the ſmoke of the infernal pit
Day after day for evermore aſcend.
No more; for now the heav'nly viſion clos'd;
Awaken'd from his trance the Patriarch turn'd
With grateful reverence to addreſs the LORD
And giver of theſe new-diſcover'd joys,
When lo! aſcending from the mount he ſaw
CHRIST in a cloud of glory on the wings
Of mighty Cherubim upborne in air
High-ſoaring, to this orb terraqueous bound,
Seen over-head diminiſh'd to a point
Dim and opake amid the blue ſerene:
His raiment, whiter than the new-born light
Struck out of chaos by the Maker's hand
In earneſt of creation, ſparkling blaz'd
In it's ſwift motion and with fiery track
Mark'd his aſcent to earth; the hoſt of Saints
With joyful loud hoſannas fill'd the air:
Glory to God on high, was all their ſtrain,
On the earth peace, good-will to all mankind!
Meanwhile th' Arch-angel GABRIEL, who yet kept
His tutelary ſtation on the mount,
So bidd'n of CHRIST, with arm outſtretch'd and voice
Commanding ſilence, thus the Saints beſpake.

Now is your reſurrection ſure, your joy,
Your glory and your triumph over Death
And hell made perfect; for behold where CHRIST
Your firſt-fruit is aris'n, and waves on high
The enſign of redemption; now he ſoars
Up to yon pendent world, that darkling ſpeck,
Which in the boundleſs empyrean floats
Pois'd on it's whirling axle; there he liv'd
And took your mortal body, there he died
And for your ſakes endur'd the painful croſs,
Giving his blood a ranſom for your ſins;
Thither he goes to re-aſſume his fleſh;
There, when his angel miniſters have op'd
The ſealed ſepulchre, he ſhall come forth
And ſhew himſelf reſurgent from the grave
To thoſe whom he hath ſanctified and call'd
To be his witneſſes in all the world,
And of his reſurrection after death
Their faithful evidence to ſeal with blood
Of martyrs and apoſtles, warning men
With their laſt breath to be baptiz'd and live;
So ſhall the ſeed be water'd and increaſe,
Till all the Gentile nations ſhall come in
And dwell beneath it's branches evermore.

Now

Now are the gates of everlaſting life
Set open to mankind, and when the LORD,
Captain of their ſalvation, ſhall have liv'd
His promis'd term on earth, and thence to heav'n
Aſcending ſeat himſelf at God's right hand,
Then ſhall the Holy Ghoſt the Comforter
Ruſh like a mighty wind upon the hearts
Of his inſpir'd apoſtles; tongues of fire
And languages untaught they ſhall receive
To ſpeak with boldneſs the revealed Word,
Enduring all things for the goſpel's ſake;
Troubled on ev'ry ſide yet not diſtreſs'd,
Perplex'd but not ſurrender'd to deſpair,
Afflicted not forſaken they ſhall be,
Caſt down but not deſtroy'd, knowing that God,
Who raiſed the LORD JESUS from the dead,
Them alſo into life through him will raiſe,
And that the light affliction of this world,
Which is but for a moment, ſoon ſhall be
O'erpaid by a far more exceeding weight
Of glory' eternal in the life to come.
He ceas'd, and all were ſilent, wrapt in awe
Of the late glorious viſion, yet in heart
Troubled for what the Angel had reveal'd
Of ſorrows ſtill to come and pains and deaths

To be encounter'd by the Saints on earth;
When now that Shepherd, who on Sinai's mount
Commun'd with God and heard creation's plan
Expounded by it's Architect, thus ſpake.
Oh thou, whom through the fiery cloud I ſaw
On Horeb's hill, when tending Jethro's flock,
What time I heard my name twice call'd of God
In thunder from amidſt the flaming buſh,
Bidding me ſtrait go forth to looſe his ſheep
From Egypt's captive fold, I do perceive
That I have penn'd the Word of God aright,
And now in CHRIST behold the woman's ſeed
Bruiſing that Serpent's head, who wrought the fall
Of our firſt parents. Forty days and nights
On Sinai's top 'midſt thund'rings, clouds and fire
Faſting I ſtood, and whilſt the hallow'd ground
Trembled beneath my bare unſandal'd feet,
I heard an awful voice, that bade me write
The glorious record of his ſix days work.
Aghaſt, confounded, dazzled with the blaze
Of glory, ſtill my faithful pen obey'd
The ſacred dictates of an unſeen God:
I wrote, and to an unbelieving world
Publiſh'd the wond'rous Code; age after age
Libell'd the tranſcript: With the rod of pow'r

I ſmote the ſeas aſunder; Iſrael paſs'd
Through wat'ry battlements; forty long years
In the waſte howling wilderneſs I fed
Their murmuring tribes with food miraculous;
They fed but murmur'd ſtill: I brought them laws
With God's own finger graven; I came down
Bearing Jehovah's ſtatutes in my hand
On both ſides written; impious noiſy ſhouts,
Lewd triumphs and vile revels ſmote mine ear;
The people danc'd around a molten calf,
Monſtrous idolatry! Raging with ſhame
I daſh'd the ſtony tablets on the ground,
And ſhiver'd them to fragments; God was mock'd;
A ſtiff-neck'd and a ſtubborn race they were,
Who from the rock of their ſalvation turn'd
And ſacrific'd to devils; and behold!
Their ſons have crucified the LORD OF LIFE;
Therefore his reſurrection, which ſhall be
Light and redemption to the Gentile world,
To them is darkneſs and the ſhadow' of death;
For they have ſlain the very Paſchal Lamb;
That bloody ſymbol of their antient law,
Which I made ſacred, they have now made void,
And cancell'd my legation: I perceive
A new commandment is gone forth; I ſee

The temple's vail is rent; for the old law,
A carnal ſhadow of things ſpiritual,
Suffic'd not for perfection and the pow'r
Of an eternal life: CHRIST is become
That King of Salem, that immortal Prieſt
Of God moſt high, whoſe miniſtry ſupreme,
Before all time from heav'n itſelf deriv'd
And not from right Levitical, removes
All title from that conſecrated tribe,
Where I had fix'd it. God, who ſending me,
Sent but his ſervant, now hath giv'n his Son
More worthy of his glory; without ſin
And ſpotleſs He, the great High Prieſt, hath paſs'd
Into the heav'ns victorious over Death;
But I, whoſe treſpaſſes at Meribah,
Frail ſinful man, provok'd the Lord to wrath,
Saw but the ſkirts of Dan from Piſgah's top,
Unworthy deem'd to enter that fair land,
And died upon mount Nebo. But when CHRIST,
Who hath awaken'd us from ſleep, ſhall riſe
And in his mortal fleſh a ſecond time
Viſit his Saints on earth, who then ſhall ſay
There is no reſurrection of the dead?
Faintly I ſhadow'd forth a future life;
I ſpake not to men's ſenſes, as CHRIST ſpeaks;

God gave me no commiſſion to reveal
The ſecrets of the grave; corruption's worm
Spar'd not my fleſh, nor came my ſpirit back
From Death's dark citadel to give mankind
Conviction ocular of his defeat;
I left him in his power till CHRIST ſhould come
To break that ſceptre, which had aw'd the world.
Much then it moves my wonder, much I grieve
That darkneſs ſhall not yet be drawn aſide
From Iſrael, and that thoſe, who would not hear
Me and the prophets, ſhall not yet believe
CHRIST their Meſſias riſing from the dead.
To whom th' Arch-angel anſwer'd heav'nly mild:
Well may'ſt thou muſe that reas'ning man ſhould doubt,
And cauſe we have to grieve, when he neglects
So great ſalvation; but when CHRIST hath ſhewn
What is the good and true and perfect way,
Reaſon muſt do the reſt: When all are free
Some muſt be faithleſs, wilful and perverſe.
God could have made his creatures void of ſin,
For he can put a maſter in their hearts,
And govern them by inſtinct; but to man
He gave a nobler faculty, a will;
A ſpark of immortality, a ſoul,
Reaſon to counſel that immortal ſoul;

And conſcience to reſtrain licentious will.
Grace ſhall aſſiſt the humble and devout;
A proud man hath no friend in heav'n or earth,
Renounc'd of angels and by men abhorr'd:
Truth muſt be ſought, it will not be impos'd:
What were that revelation, which ſhould leave
No exerciſe to faith? All men muſt work
With fear and trembling their ſalvation out.
God does not give free will to take away
What he hath giv'n; if man will ſin, he muſt:
Nor do we call them good, who cannot err,
Elſe brutes would claim a virtue. None is good
Save God alone; impute we not to God
The evil which man does, nor him arraign
For not preventing ills which he foreknows:
Angels have ſinn'd and ſome are fall'n from bliſs;
All had their days of error, their degrees
Of good and ill, elſe why have we degrees
Ranks and precedencies of bliſs in heav'n?
Call your own lives to mind; ye have been men,
Your failings many, yet your virtues more;
Why are ye now rewarded by your God?
Why but becauſe thoſe virtues were your own?
Ye made them what they were, ye rear'd their growth,
Reaſon reform'd the wild luxuriant ſoil,

Pluck'd

Pluck'd up the weeds and nurs'd the glorious fruit.
Is there amongſt you one that hath to boaſt
Human perfection? There is none that will.
A free yet faultleſs creature would be more
Than man, than angel; nor can God create
An equal to himſelf, a rival God.
In Eden's happy groves when man was plac'd,
One interdicted baneful plant there was,
Tempting and rich in fruit; all elſe was good,
Fair to the eye and wholeſome to the taſte;
Yet of that fruit man pluck'd and eat and died;
Tempted he was, but not compell'd to take;
Warn'd to abſtain, no angel ſtopp'd his hand,
No thundering voice deterr'd him from the deed,
For man was free; ſo could he not have been,
Had God's foreknowledge over-rul'd his will.
Thus Sin had origin and Death began
His occupation with the human race,
More terrible for that he came with pangs,
Horrors and doubts on ſin-oppreſſed man,
When conſcience wrung him in the parting hour:
But ſtill the inextinguiſhable ſoul
Mock'd at Death's dart, the body was his own
From the beginning; of the earth 'twas made,
The earth it till'd and from the earth it fed;

A tenement

A tenement of duſt was never form'd
For immortality; and now, behold,
Adam the earthy man, in whom all die,
Is buried to the world; redemption brings
The day-ſpring of Salvation from on high,
CHRIST in his glory comes, the LORD from heav'n,
And who in him have faith, in him have life.
He ceas'd, when now th' aſſembly of the Saints,
Who whilſt he ſpake ſtood in their orbs unmov'd
Circling the mount, 'gan feel the Spi'rit of God
Deſcending on their hearts, and, like a ſea
By ſecret currents from it's bottom ſtirr'd,
Wav'd to and fro their undulating files
Wide and more wide, as with a mighty wind
The heav'nly inſpiration on them ruſh'd:
This GABRIEL heard and from the mount came down,
Which quak'd beneath his feet, whilſt over-head
Loud thunderings announc'd the coming God:
And now a fire, that cover'd all the mount,
Beſpoke him preſent; all the air reſpir'd
Ambroſial odours, amaranth and roſe,
For Nature felt her God, and every flower
And every fragrant ſhrub, whoſe honied breath
Perfumes the courts of heav'n, had burſt to life
Blooming, and, in a thouſand colors dy'd,

Threw

Threw their gay mantle o'er the naked heath:
Now glow'd the living landſcape; hill and dale
Roſe on the flat, or ſunk as Nature ſhap'd
Her lovelieſt forms and ſwell'd her wavey line,
Leaving unrein'd variety to run
Her wild career amid the ſportive ſcene:
Nor were there wanting trees of ev'ry growth,
Umbrageous ſome, making a verdant tent
Under their ſpreading branches, ſome of ſhaft
Majeſtic, tow'ring o'er the ſubject groves:
Bloſſoms and fruits and aromatic gums
Scented the breeze, that fann'd their ruſtling leaves;
And them betwixt a cryſtal river flow'd
O'er golden ſands, meand'ring in it's courſe
Through amaranthine banks with lulling ſound
Of dulcet murmurs breathing ſoft repoſe.
Thus at the ſight of God ſpontaneous roſe
A Paradiſe within the realm of Death,
Where that bleſt congregation might abide
Their LORD's return now viſitant on earth:
And now th' Eternal having breath'd his joy
Into their hearts and giv'n them to diſcern
All knowledge, that befitted ſouls ſo bleſt,
Withdrew his preſence from the flaming mount;

Whereat the min'iſtring Angel, who beheld
Salvation's work complete, thus parting ſpake.
God, in whoſe preſence pleaſure ever dwells,
Hath for your dear Redeemer's ſake beſtow'd
Theſe joys, and now his preſence is withdrawn;
Yet hath he left his ſpirit in your hearts
To teach you all that is and is to be:
Behold, the cloud that veil'd your mortal eyes
Is drawn aſide, and what as in a glaſs
Darkling ye ſaw now face to face is ſeen:
Ye now diſcern the ways of God how juſt,
How true, how wiſe, how perfect in deſign,
And well ye know that man, preſumptuous man,
In a vain ſhadow walketh; ye perceive
His boaſted mind ſufficient for the things,
That to his own ſalvation appertain;
Yet when it ſcans the myſteries of heaven,
How falſe, how weak, how daringly abſurd!
Firm faith, warm charity and humble hope,
Theſe are the Chriſtian graces, theſe the guides,
That lead to life eternal; thoughts perverſe,
Pert quibbling follies, publiſh'd in the pride
Of falſe philoſophy, are dev'liſh arts,
That damn the inſtrument, who thus attempts
To hide the light of revelation's beam

From weaker eyes, and turn the world from God;
Theſe verily ſhall have their juſt reward:
And now no more; this Paradiſe ye ſee
Is but your paſſage to a brighter ſcene,
A reſting-place till CHRIST ſhall re-aſcend
To the right hand of God and call you hence
To ſhare his glory in the heav'n of heavens.
He ſaid, and ſwifter than the meteor's glance,
Sprung on the wing to ſeek his native ſphere:
The Saints look'd up, then ſung with joint acclaim—
Glory to God and praiſes to his CHRIST,
Judge and Redeemer of the quick and dead!

END OF THE POEM.


BRITISH MUSEUM